

**Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts &
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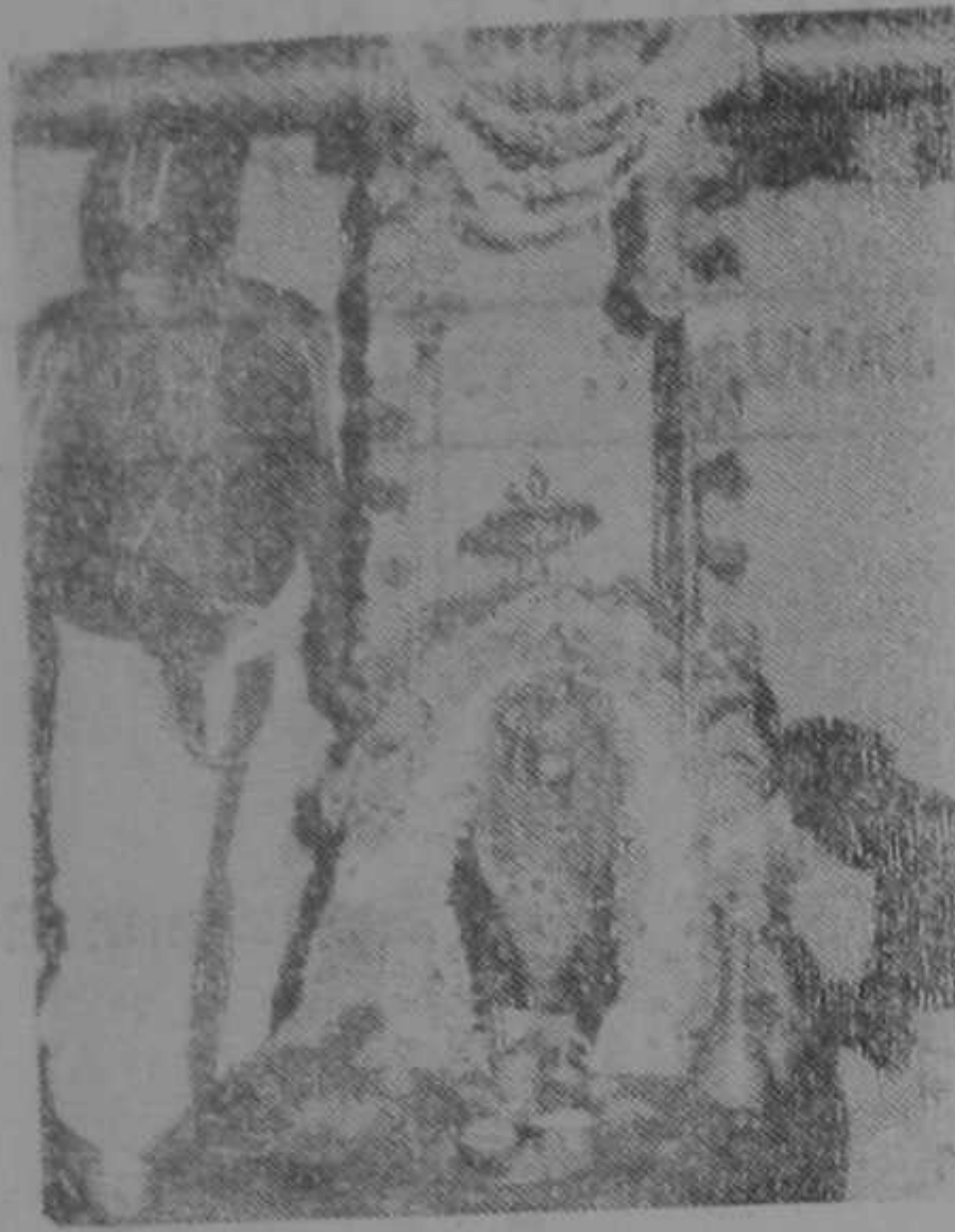
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The views expressed in SHANMUKHA are the Writer's own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the publishers.

DOLOTSAV

Sriman Narayana ... Sriman Narayana ... the welcome strains of Annamacharya's Sankeerthana rent the air as Srimad Azhagiasingar, Sri Srivan Sadagopa Sri Narayana Yathendrapa Mahadesikan, the 45th Jeer of Ahobila Mutt, stepped on to the portals of the Shanmukhananda.



Characteristics essential for students and teachers respectively, drawing instances from the very Krishnavatar whose Dolotsav was performed in the premises.

So 'humble' and simple that Lord, the Nataraja' was, that he required no stage (Aranagam), no paraphernalia. He danced on Kalinga's head to the rhythmic

A solemn tranquillity descended as the atmosphere was charged with Bhakti with songs and Sankeerthanas of saints and savants, rendered by the students and teachers of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya, and reinforced by heart-rending Bhajans by Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan in celebration of Dolotsav.

That presented a true picture of National Integration and Cultural Synthesis, for which the Sabha strives constantly. Bhadrachala Ramadas, Annamacharya, Oothukkadu Venkatakavi, Tyagaraja, Dikshitar, Alvars, Tulsidas — the Vaggeyakars' 'heart-pourings' took one and all to an ethereal world.

Capping the serene Bhakti mode came the benediction, the Anugraha Bhashana of the Jeer, after His Holiness was felicitated by the President and the Secretary of the Sabha.. His Holiness gracefully but emphatically stressed the importance of humility, and Sharanagathi; and magnanimity, the two cha-

support of the waves of Yamuna and graced His dance anywhere he was invited. He was Ganapriya and the Sangeetha that rent the air certainly deserved His blessings, said the Jeer.

His Holiness also enunciated the Sharanagati Tatva and the role of the Geetacharya, whose Upadesa was meant not for Arjuna alone but to the whole Universe. 'Do your duty (karma)', 'anticipate no results', 'Deter not by hurdles 'surrend Unto Him' — the final bliss is all yours — was the message His Holiness benignly conveyed with analogies.

In that implied the uphill task before the Sabha for renovating the Hall and the students to shine as future stars.

A rare treat one would cherish as long as one lived. December 4, 1993 would go down as a golden day in the annals of the Sabha's history.

Shanmukha

IN FOCUS

SHANMUKHA has come a long way, leaving behind its teens and entering twenties in a prayerful mood for a greater indepth study of Fine Arts, SHANMUKHA Wishes its Readers, Contributors, Subscribers, Advertisers and above all its Well-wishers who have lent a helping hand a very Happy New Year & Pongal.

One of the most cherished moments Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha and Vidyalaya had was the Dolotsav and the Benediction of the Jeer, the 45th Pontiff of the Ahobila Mutt in December, 1993. SHANMUKHA recalls the rich experience and the Anugraha Bhashanam His Holiness gave.

After the inimitable Dwaram, SHANMUKHA goes nostalgic about one of his contemporaries, Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, who chose to 'reign' as a 'glorious accompanist'. It also carries anecdotes of "cherished moments of a Chela", as narrated by his daughter.

In the present age where the force of rapid Westernisation on the one hand, and needless orthodoxy of priesthood on the other, are causing "a rift that may completely cut us off from the rich heritage of performing arts of the temple", what are the efforts that are made to "reclaim" the devotional hymns? SHANMUKHA reproduces the relentless efforts of Srirama Bharati towards 'reconstructing the music and dance traditions in Divya Prabandham,' a treasure trove in itself, which has attracted many a musician to go in a big way to explore and propagate.

The Sangeetha Kalanidhi of this Year who has had a rare distinction of learning at the feet of a galaxy of stalwart-teachers offers her 'presidential address' as the Guru Pranam. SHANMUKHA reproduces extracts.

How did Muthuswamy Dikshitar mould Vivadi Melas to musical compositions? Dr. S. Sita analyses it in great detail.

In an 'autobiographical' sketch Chaturdandi Prakasika reveals some clues to the source of Asampoorna and Sampoorna nomenclatures the Melakartas were assigned.

As a mark of its deep reverence to the spiritual crusader SHANMUKHA pays its tribute to the late Krupananda Variar.

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The Glorious Accompanist

Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai. The name conjures up a vision of a giant with a violin that looked almost a 'lilliputan' — a play thing resting on his broad chest. Tall and sturdy, he evoked an aura, a sense of awe in you. But how alive the music flowed once he bowed the strings and caressed them with his fingers! More than his music, he towered over others with his magnanimity, diplomacy, and large heartedness.

THE ACCOMPANIST TRIO

Early this century, prior to the advent of the present day stalwarts, there were about four Violinists who reigned supreme, "each as different from the other as chalk from cheese." The names of Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, 'Papa' Venkataramiah, Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai and Mysore Chowdiah have been etched in golden letters in the annals of the history of Indian music. While Dwaram stood out as a soloist, never wanting to second fiddle after initial forays into the role of an accompanist, the other three made their way into concert stream both as accompanists and soloists. Among the trio, Chowdiah streamed off with his seven-stringed innovation, evolving a new style in musical presentation and adding a new dimension to accompaniment as well.

The other two, 'Papa' Venkataramiah and Kumbakonam Rajamanickam Pillai, being scions of two distinct styles, added their own, carving a niche for themselves. 'Papa' was a direct disciple of

that stalwart Trichy (Malaikottai) Govindaswamy Pillai and Rajamanickam Pillai belonged to Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer's Sishya Parampara, having learnt under Tirukkodikaval Ramaswamy Iyer — a disciple of Krishna Iyer.

'Papa' imbibed his master's style, adding an embellishment of tonal modulations of Western 'pianissimo' and 'fortissimo' musical effects. Thus he eschewed the vigorous tonal effects and brought about a 'Nayam', honeyed sweetness and grace to his rendition. 'Papa' followed quintessence as his *Taraka Mantra*, and in that crisp brevity found his musical fulfilment, enriching the vocalist's style and giving gleanings of his own.

RESOURCEFUL & CHALLENGING

Quite the contrast was Rajamanickam Pillai. He was at once resourceful and challenging to the vocalist he accompanied. His unflagging zeal posed a challenge — a challenge that remained within the parameters of tradition — while his amiable hand lifted a performer from any vocal morass. Short bowing, so characteristic of his style produced staccato effects, "abrasive at times, but the sureness of touch with which he hit off supple, graceful and succinct phrases more than made up for that defect. And the cumulative effect of the phrases invariably proved to be an artistic construction of uncommon beauty", observes a connoisseur of yesteryears. His Kalpanaswaras were marked for their effervescence, but never, did he stray off the Laya bounds.

Time-tested Ragas like Todi, Kambhoji, Kalyani, Sankarabharanam he was very much involved in but melodies like Kapi and Khamas acquired a flavour all their own. With him as an accompanist the concert as a whole "gained a rich spicy flavour", says the connoisseur.

TEAM WORK

The role of an accompanist is never an easy task. Maintaining one's 'self' expression and yet blending with the vocalist calls for great mental poise and performing alacrity. Mastering several styles (Vocal) is a prerequisite. And that requires an artistic perception, an assiduous application, sensitive receptivity and an unerring aesthetic sense. And if the vocalist happened to revel in 'Vivahara', sure the accompanist should rise up to the Laya intricacies.

It was the teamwork that bound the performing artistes of yesteryears on the concert forum. The accompanists accepted their supportive role even if they were senior in the field. Many a vocalist owed his rise to the amiable accompanists whose encouragement, boost, was beyond what could words convey.

REVERENTIAL SADHAKA

And Pillai took his role with reverence and relentless Sadhaka. Maximum support — *Anusaranai* — was his maxim. For which 'Suswara' was of utmost necessity, he believed. He could mould himself to any musical style. Being himself a fine vocalist, he did not have to strain much to toe the style. Yet, he did not leave anything to chance, says

one of his sishtyas, Neduntheru Sadagopachariar, an Octogenarian Harikatha exponent.* "He not only learnt to play the instrument, but also did tremendous Sadhaka for accompanying with veteran Namakkal Narasimha Iyengar," says this Sishya. "To move with the flow of music without any hassle should be the criteria of an accompanist," Rajamanickam Pillai often used to say. To quote *A Garland*, "Violin in his hands found harmony and established close identity with the musician and rarely sought to carve out any distinct identity." The style of his Guru Parampara which evolved and nourished both the roles of an accompanist and soloist was discernible in Pillai's play. The success of a concert was his main concern.

A disciplinarian, he owed it to his mother Kamalaththammal who nurtured his talent early in music. Born in 1898 in Isai Vellalar sect, music was in his veins. From 9th year started his training which got him on to the debut in 1915 under his Guru Tirukkodikaval Ramaswamy Iyer. At the age of 10 he was sent to Veda Patashala.

The year 1916 was a landmark in the life of Shri Pillai, as it set his career-graph on the ascent. Playing at a festival at Karur, he won a prize from the local prince, and the blessings of the Gayakasikhamani Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavathar which augured him well. Soon he was being 'billed' for veteran vocalists, marked among them being 'Poochi' Srinivasa Iyengar, his disciple Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Sangita Bhoopathi Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer, Chembai, Musiri, GNB, Madurai Mani Iyer — the list is endless.

*Elsewhere in this issue the Sishya's reminiscences are recorded by his daughter, Smt. Rama Krishnaswamy in Tamil.

Going through his 'bio-data', distributed in November, 1970, at the condolence meeting held at Kumbakonam, one gets the impression that Pillai's rise and recognition on the firmament was as methodical and natural as his planned training. What one does not know is the toil behind all this accomplishment and the struggle for survival that he had to put up on the financial front.

REFINED & RETICENT

Cordiality and courtesy, dedication and discipline endeared him to one and all, be they his conferers or his chelas. Ariyakudi had a great fascination for his Sarvalaghu and his style of closely following as "a shadow". Viswanatha Iyer admired at his aptitude for the art of accompaniment. "He knew where to step in and when to retrace," he once expressed recalling his own experience. Once at a concert, Iyer had some difficulty with the voice at the early phase. Responding to the 'call of the duty' Pillai filled in for the Vocalist's debility by playing the alapana elaborate. Once the Sangita Bhupati's voice warmed up, and he came up with his musical darts, Pillai retraced to his role of the accompanist.

It is learnt that Rajamanickam Pillai had a significant role to play in the rise of Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and Alathur Brothers in their early career. His pairing with Umayalpuram Kodandaramiar went a long way in giving a boost to Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, we are told. So also was the team of Pillai — Palghat Mani Iyer — Palani Subbudu to Alathur Brothers, in their early career. Incidentally, it was he, it is claimed, who let an upa-Pakka Vadya like Kanjira have an equal status in a concert.

Rajamanickam Pillai's sterling qualities, his staunch faith in the art and respect for artistes often helped him tide over crises with equanimity. The example of GNB's concert at Vani Vilasa Sabha, Kumbakonam, as narrated by his disciple, Sikkil Bhaskaran, comes to mind. Chowdiah who was to accompany GNB with Palghat Mani Iyer had not arrived on time owing to the breakdown of his car. People, who had thronged in thousands were becoming restless and demanded that the concert be started. Rajamanickam Pillai, the secretary of the Sabha, found himself in a fix. But the artiste in him rose to the occasion, stepped in for Chowdiah and commenced the concert. An hour later when Chowdiah arrived, he magnanimously welcomed the maestro, honoured him and let him take up his rightful place as scheduled.

A 'GOPURAM'

Pillai was a great 'diplomat' too. A peculiar incident at Chettinad would have caused a lot of embarrassment among colleagues but for the tact and diplomacy of Rajamanickam Pillai Rasikas of Chettinad were once fired with an idea of holding a 'solo' competition between Rajamanickam Pillai and Chowdiah, with a prize money of Rs. 10,000 for the winner. Quite a fortune then. The latter had agreed, but Pillai felt piqued. 'Was it all necessary?' he ruminated. Diplomatically he suggested to the patron, Chokkiah Chettiar of Karaikudi, that the defeated be paid the amount and sent off the concert scene, never to be called to play at concerts; and the winner booked for concerts all over. A non-plussed patron had no alternative but to call off the competition. A crisis was averted

and stalwarts' reputation saved. Rightly had Sethuramiah (Chowdiah's disciple) compared Pillai to a 'Gopuram' (a temple tower).

Royal Courts and Sabhas showered honours on him. The Courts of Ettayapuram, Cochin, Ramnad, Travancore, Mysore etc., honoured him. He became the Asthana Vidwan of Travancore in 1940. In 1942 he was presented with an elephant for the temple at Kumbakonam. Sangeetha Kalanidhi was conferred on him in 1948 by the Music Academy, Madras, followed by other awards by the Government of India and 'Kala' Academies. Of all the honours and awards the one he cherished most was the elephant he received for the Kumbesar temple from the King of Travancore. The temple was without one for long and it was his ambition to procure one, and he had it fulfilled. 'Elephant god', Ganesha, was his Ishta Devata too. The king of Travancore gave lands (Maniyam) too for the upkeep of the elephant.

The mighty master was a taskmaster. He spared no rod in disciplining his students and their Sadhaka. He let them find their own 'moorings' in musical nuances, and finer aesthetics whether in vocal or violin. That way he trained each one of them to become an individual stylist. M. M. Dandapani Desigar, Neduntheru Sadagopachariar, Kumbakonam Mythily, V. P. Rajeswari, Papa Swaminathan, among vocalists, and Mayavaram Govindaraja Pillai, Janardhanam Pillai, Kuzhikkurai Pichiappa Pillai (Nagaswaram), Ramamurthy Iyer, and Sikkil Bhaskaran among the violinists are names to reckon with. Many among them have carved a niche for themselves.

Pillai passed away in his 73rd year in 1970, but his style lingers on. His birth centenary is five years away. Should one wait till then to sing paeans of this peer?

Sulochana Rajendran

DISCOVERING YOUNG TALENT

"I know of no pleasure more satisfying for the critic than to understand and describe a young talent in all its freshness, its open and primitive quality, before it is glossed over later by whatever is acquired and perhaps manufactured."

— Saint—Beuve, The French Critic.

ON JAZZ

"Jazz does not do what serious music does either in its range of emotional expressivity or in its depth of feeling, nor in its universality of language. (It does have universality of appeal, which is not the same thing.) On the other hand, jazz does do what serious music cannot do, namely, suggest a colloquialism of musical speech that is indigenously delightful, a kind of here-and-now feeling, less enduring than classical music, perhaps, but with an immediacy and vibrancy that audiences throughout the world find exhilarating."

Aaron Copland "On Music".

Music and Dance Traditions In Divya Prabandham

(Some Reconstructions)

By
SRIRAMA BHARATI

The Divya Prabandham consists of the sacred utterances of the Tamil Alwar saints, compiled by Sri Nathamuni (9th Cent.) into four books of a thousand hymns each in the style of the Vedas. The Alwar saints, twelve in number, are of varied origins, mostly shrouded in mystery. They belong to a period between the 6th and 8th centuries A.D., though in regard to their dates, history and tradition do not always agree. They all belong to the Tamil country, and contribute a major portion of the literature of the Tamil Bhakti Movement. By the untiring efforts of Nathamuni, Alavandar and Ramanuja, the three Acharyas of the Munitraya Sampradaya, a philosophy of Bhakti evolved, giving to the Divya Prabandham the status of the Vedas in the temple and in the intellectual life of the country.

POWER OF MUSIC

The four Books of the Divya Prabandham are : *Mudalayiram*, *Peria Tirumoli*, *Iyarpa*, and *Tiruvaimoli*. Of these, the third, *Iyarpa*, consists of poetic stanzas which are, as the name itself suggests, meant to be recited or declaimed. The other three, referred to as *Isaipa* or musical stanzas, are meant to be sung as songs.

The power of the message of the Alwars must have lain as much in the music of the verse as in the verses themselves, for such is the power of

saintly music. It is said that Nathamuni, the compiler of the work, came by a stray verse ('*Aravamude*') being sung by some minstrels from Tirunarayanapuram, and it was then that he began his long search for the *Tiruvaimoli*. This finally bore fruit in his compilation of the four books of the Divya Prabandham itself.

With the coming of new generations, however, only the verses were remembered, and for want of a written tradition, the music soon passed into oblivion. This is, in fact, what happened to Church music during the early part of the Christian Era, until Pope Gregory took upon himself the task of reconstructing the ancient modes and setting the chants to musical notation.

Efforts are needed in the direction of reclaiming the ancient temple music of India immediately. Temple music, like the temples, is crumbling, and only a concerted effort drawn from enlightened public participation can save it from passing into oblivion altogether.

RELEVANCE OF DIVYA PRABANDHAM

As Literature :

For children, it contains simple songs and nursery rhymes with a direct approach to the heart and communicating the value of faith. For young boys and girls, there are verses that are

sweet to utter, or tongue-twisting, or breath-taking, but all vibrant with the joy of learning and growing, and helping to cultivate healthy habits and wholesome values. For young adults, there are poems spiced with sentiments of amour and humour, that say it all, and say it with dignity. For mothers, it is an eternal source of comfort during child bearing and child-rearing, while to the child, it is a treat to the finest lullabies. Scholars may find in it an untiring inquiry into the absurdity yet meaning of the Universe and our Being. Last but not the least, it is an armchair travelogue of the numerous pilgrimage centres in India, offering information to the tourist on his course, as well as consolation for those unable to set out on their course.

In National Integration :

The Divya Prabandham is perhaps the only Tamil work of its size and importance which is read outside Tamil Nadu as well. There are printed copies of the work available in Telugu and Kannada scripts, and now even in Devanagari script (brought out by P. B. Anangaracharya of Kanchipuram). This speaks for the wide reach of the work among the various linguistic groups in the country. Non-Tamils who have no knowledge of Tamil are yet familiar with the work through these and other publications by way of translations and commentaries.

There is also a very strong emotional identification to the Bhakti Movement all over the country, transcending barriers of place, time and people. Thinkers, seers, poets, singers and saints alike, have all drawn richly in inspiration and content for their work from the Divya Prabandham, through the teachings of Ramanuja.

As an instrument for the propagation of Gandhian ideals :

Ramanuja believed in the equality of men regardless of caste and colour. He gave to the downtrodden the name "Tiruk-kulattar" (lit., of the Holy Family), and ensured that all were given free and equal access to work, worship and social activity in the temple.

Women were given a special place of honour in the Vaishnava fold, and the songs of Andal — the lone female saint among the Alwars — were considered especially worthy of being sung every day in the temple and the home.

Self-dependence, social harmony and *Ananda*, the cultivation of joy in life, these are abiding values enshrined in the Vaishnava lore and the Divya Prabandham. The message is as relevant today as it was a thousand years ago.

THE TRADITION OF MUSIC AND DANCE IN THE DIVYA PRABANDHAM

In the rendering of the Divya Prabandham, several traditions arose from time to time, ever since the text became part of temple-literature. The course of evolution naturally brought about numerous regional variations in its wake, but more importantly, it made the Divya Prabandham a medium for the expression of joy, *Ananda*, which is at the foundation of all Upanishadic thought, and upon which Ramanuja based his philosophy. Quite apart from its religious content, the Divya Prabandham has served as a source of perennial inspiration for creative expression through music and dance; indeed at the highest level of experience, the spiritual and the aesthetic are inseparable.

Evolution however, is not always progressive, and in the case of the Divya Prabandham, during the thousand years of its performance in and outside the temple, the musical element has suffered; has been much forgotten and to some extent, is even totally lost to us. In the present age, the force of rapid Westernization on the one hand, and the needless orthodoxy of priesthood on the other, are causing a rift that may completely cut us off from the rich heritage of performing arts of the temple.

There is therefore an immediate need for a systematic effort to reclaim, to the extent possible, this music from the various little-known sources scattered over the country. This is the inspiration for the present project.

RECLAMATION OF ANCIENT MUSIC

The process of reclaiming Divya Prabandham music falls under three broad categories :

Recovery : where the music is available in actual performance, and where either the un-brokenness of lineage of performers of textual references testify to the authenticity of the music.

Restoration : where the music is aberrated by poor performance, or where "Pan-Talam" references in manuscripts of the Divya Prabandham, could give an outline of the music.

Re-creation : where no reference of either textual or oral tradition is available and the music must be conceived and created anew.

This last process must, however, be on sound lines : Tamil poetry makes

elaborate distinctions in the tone of a poem, as being declaratory, advisory, recitative, bouncy, narrative or introspective. The choice of the raga for a poem must take note of its tone. The Tala must follow the pulse of the poem, allowing easy flow of the words without hindrance to the music and *vice versa*. The mood sense of the poem must always be felt. The hallmark of Indian aesthetics is the approach to emotions, never directly, but as *rasa*, through enactment. Essential to it is tranquillity, the tight-rope on which emotions sway and balance. A sense for this balance is important, for in the absence of it, cheap sentimentalism, such as the revelling in *Vivadi* svaras as an expression of pathos, could transform art into caricature.

SOURCES OF STUDY

The Arayar Tradition : Arayars (lit. *Arai*-to declaim or state), were appointed the chief cantors of the Vaishnava Temples, and they held this office in no less than fourteen temples supervised by Ramanuja.

The Arayars perform the Divya Prabandham to song and dance with interpretations in extempore speech and abhinaya. They wear a specially embroidered cap, flower garlands, richly laced dhotis, and some ornaments. Their finest artistic development is in the evolution of one-man theatre that provides refined entertainment and education for the few and the many.

Arayars trace their spiritual lineage to Sri Nathamuni, the compiler of the Divya Prabandham. Their tradition contains numerous passages in Maniprava-

la from the *Tambiran-Padi*, and the *Idu*. Their music, *Devaganam*, differs much from the familiar Karnatak music, and offers much for study and examination.

The Arayar tradition is a dying institution. Of the fourteen lineages, only four survive : at the Tirunarayanapuram temple in Melkote, at the famous Srirangam temple near Trichy, at Srivilliputtur near Madurai and at Alwar Tirunagari near Tirunelveli.

The Srivilliputtur and Alwar Tirunagari Arayars perform the *Muttu Kuri*, a drama on the theme of parted lovers coming together by the mediation of the Gypsy. The text draws richly from the Divya Prabandham and includes extempore passages and Abhinaya. The Srirangam Arayars are known for their Abhinaya. Their paraphernalia includes anklets absent among the other Arayars. The Tirunarayanapuram Arayars are the only ones practising the art outside Tamil Nadu. Their repertoire is smaller.

It appears that while all Arayars trace their art to Nathamuni, there is sufficient catholicity of outlook in the tradition to permit variation and development through individual effort. The Arayar tradition forms one of the major areas of study in the project.

The Folk Tradition : The temples of Tirunangur near Sirgali, and Kumbakonam, are said to have had a long and healthy association with Tirumangai Mannan, the last of the Alwars. For this reason, perhaps, the works of this Alwar are especially cherished here. It is understood that there is a rich legacy of folk music in the rendering of the Divya

Prabandham available in these parts. Indeed there is much in the *Peria Tirumoli* itself that suggests of folk style of rendering for this work. The Alwar uses the archaic Dravidian customs of *Madal* (self-mortification for winning the lover's hand), *Kulamani Duram* (humiliation-dance inflicted upon the vanquished in war). *S'atal* (ancient Dravidian game for girls), and Gypsies and fortune tellers as frequent motifs in his poetry. Again, structurally too, the poetry mostly runs in the lines of folk music: *Odam*, (*Peria Tirumoli* 9.3), *Villup-Pattu* (*Peria Tirumoli* 1.6), *Temmangu* (*Peria Tirumoli* 10.10). A survey of the folk traditions in this area is an important source for study on the subject.

3. *Some Traditions of Recent Origin* : The Tiruk-Kurungudi temple of Vanamamalai fame has benefited much by a succession of Jeeyars many of whom have been gifted musicians. They have set to music in the Karnatak style, some of the Divya Prabandham. While this may not be historically significant, the work itself is worthy of study as it comes from a reputed source. Andalu Ammal, daughter of the last *Jeeyar*, has resources useful for the study.

The Ayodhya and Mewar temples in the North offer specimens of non-Tamil's rendering of Tamil poetry. There have also been some Tamil migrations to the North, such as in the Rangaji temple at Brindavan some two hundred years ago. It would be interesting to examine these sources also.

Written Traditions : There is a great paucity of written material in the field of music in India, primarily for want of a good system of notation. In many edi-

tions of the Divya Prabandham in print, the editors have included references to Raga, Pan and Tala, though this is of little help, except as a suggestion. But even this we do not get in full measure,

because the source is not known. As a guide for the restoration of re-creation of the music, the Tevaram tradition, which also belongs to the period of the Tamil Bhakti Movement, is helpful.

DIVYA PRABANDHAM MUSIC RECLAIMED SO FAR

PASURAM	RECLAMATION	SOURCE
1. Mudalayiram Tirup-pallandu	Part restoration,	Temple tradition of Purappadu
Vanna Madangal	Re-creation	Tyaga Bharati
S'eetak-Kadal	"	"
Manikkangatti	"	"
Tiruppavai	Recovery/ re-creation	Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar & Tyaga Bharati
Varanamayiram	Recovery	S'irpadi and urban folk tradition
Karupuram	Re-creation	Tyaga Bharati
Vinnila Melappu	"	"
Uneru	"	"
Taru Tuyaram	"	"
Anganedu Madil	Restoration	Tirunangur temple
Tirup-palli Elucchi	Recovery	Temple tradition
Kanni-nun S'irut-tambu	Re-creation	V. V. Sadagopan
2. Peria Tirumoli Vadinen	Restoration	Urban-folk tradition
S'alan-konda	"	Tirunangur temple
Vandunu Narumalar	"	Folk tradition
Ettukinrom	Re-creation	Tyaga Bharati
Tiruttai S'empotte	Re-creation	Folk tradition
Kadir-Kadippu	Re-creation	Tyaga Bharati
3. Tiruvaimoli Enganeyo	Recovery	Temple tradition
Nirai Nilanai	Restoration	Pan-tradition
Ulagamunda Peruvaya	"	"
Unnilaviya	"	"

INCIDENTAL ASPECTS OF THE STUDY

Development of Temple Music as Culture : The enjoyment of music from various periods of history as a cultural process has not attained full development in India. In the West, the performance of Church Music, of medieval and early periods, is not restricted to the Church; there are social organiza-

tions, *Collegia Musica*, professional groups, and religious bodies of other Orders, which study, perform and enjoy Church music, as music. The present project aims at developing a repertoire of good temple music with a view to teaching, performance, and the cultivation of an enlightened audience for the same.

Documentation of Temple Chants : The *Santas*, *Goshthi*, and *Adhyayana* of the Divya Prabandham proceed on definite forms and styles. While these are receiving much attention from the performance angle, little study from an academic point has been undertaken so far. This project will study and document some of the chant styles of the Divya Prabandham.

Revitalisation of Instrumental Music in Temples : Temples were once a vast storehouse of instrumental music of all kinds. Today in most temples, the musical instruments are in bad shape and fast becoming museum pieces. There is no dearth of talent to play on them. Only a long and excessive separation from the mainstream of national life has made the temple musicians apathetic to their art. With a little effort, temple musicians could be helped to perform good music once again.

SUMMARY

The Divya Prabandham of the Alwars forms a major part of the literature of the Tamil Bhakti Movement (6th-8th Cent.). Its direct appeal to the heart, as well its accessibility in non-Tamil languages and scripts makes it uniquely relevant as an instrument of educa-

tion, social harmony, and national integration.

Speaking as it does the language of joy, 'the Divya Prabandham has, through the ages, served as a medium of creative self-expression through music and dance, such as in the Arayar traditions in the temples of Tirunarayanapuram, Srirangam, Srivilliputtur and Alwar Tirunagari. These are worthy of immediate study in the interest of preservation of our National culture. Also noteworthy are the various folk and urban-folk styles of rendering the Divya Prabandham. A study of these and other traditions, including the *pan* tradition of ancient Tamil music, is being pursued in this project.

The purpose of this project is to document an area of art which has long been neglected in India. But more than this, it aims at creating a repertoire of good Temple music, a band of performers who can teach as well, and an enlightened listenership that participates in the discovery process, so that Temple music may claim its rightful place in the cultural life of India once more.

Courtesy Indian Music Journal, (1975-80)

OBITUARY

We record with deep regret the passing away recently of Shri A. Kandaswamy who served the Sabha with devotion since its inception in various capacities as a Member of the Managing Committee, its Hon. Secretary, etc. and worked for the growth of the organisation.

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Guru Pranam

(Smt. MANI KRISHNASWAMY is one of the very few musicians who has had the rare distinction of learning under a galaxy of stalwart-teachers of this century. Moulded by them thus to reach 'the soul of music', she dedicates her presidential address at the 67th Annual Conference of the Music Academy, Madras, which conferred on her the title of 'Sangitha Kalanidhi', to her Gurus. Published below are excerpts from her speech.)

At this solemn moment, my thoughts go back to my parents, Lakshminarasimhachari and Marakatavalli. I recall the affection with which they encouraged me to learn music and I offer this honour at their feet. I also remember on this occasion my Gurus, Ellayya and Murugan, Jalatarangam Ramanayya Chetti, Tiruparkadal Srinivasa Iyengar, Tiger Varadachariar, Budalur Krishnamurti Sastrigal, T. K. Jayarama Iyer, Mysore Vasudevachar, Musiri Subramanya Iyer and my present Guru, Chengalpattu Ranganathan, but for whose fostering care in shaping me, I would not have merited this honour which I respectfully place at their feet.

Since this honour is being bestowed on a woman artiste after a gap of 16 years, I consider it as an honour done to all women artistes in general by the Academy. Women artistes of today and tomorrow owe a debt of gratitude to the illustrious stalwarts, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, Smt. D. K. Pattmmal, Smt. M. L. Vasanthakumari, Smt. Brinda and Smt. Balasaraswati, for, it was they who laid the path for this recognition by the Academy....

Indian music has had a long evolution — from Nada to Srutis, from Srutis to Svaras and from Svaras to hundreds of Ragas which are the special features of our musical system.

Sampradaya or tradition and a knowledge of Sastra or theory enable one to master this music. Sampradaya means the expertise acquired by Gurukulavasa with a qualified teacher and imbibing musical wisdom from him. Sampradaya is so important in our music that Tyagaraja, in one of his songs, describes God Himself as a *Sangita Sampradayakudu*.

Sampradaya is thus the soul of our music and I consider it my unique good fortune that I learnt it from vidwans who were custodians of tradition. During my early years at Vellore, Jalatarangam Ramanayya Chetti and Tiruparkadal Srinivasa Iyengar (father of Tiruparkadal Veeraraghavan) laid the foundation for my musical career. I can never forget the laya vidwan Gopalachariar, father of Vellore Ramabhadran, who gave me all encouragement during my formative years.

After passing Matriculation, I joined Kalakshetra at Madras for the Sangita Siromani Course. During my stay there I was the recipient of unbounded love and affection from Smt. Rukmini Devi. I had the privilege of functioning as her secretary for some time. My close association with Smt. Rukmini Devi is something which I shall always cherish till the end of my life. What a grand and sublime atmosphere Kalakshetra had in the campus in those days! What a ga-

laxy of great veterans she was able to gather under one roof! Hallowed names like Karaikudi Sambasiva Iyer, Tiger Varadachariar, Budalur Sastrigal, Mysore Vasudevachar, Chandu Panicker, Papanasam Sivan, Gowri Ammal. It was my good fortune that I had the privilege to study and learn the lessons of music at the feet of great masters.

I cannot find adequate words to describe the mighty personality of Tiger Varadachariar who was the Principal then. He was veritably an ocean of music. I benefited from every moment I spent in his presence and by the torrent of music that he used to treat his students with.

The highly respected Budalur Krishnamurti Sastrigal was a supreme example of purity of Kriti rendering and Sampradaya. Although he was a great exponent of the Gottuvadyam, he was an excellent vocalist as well and taught me a large number of compositions in their impeccable pathantaras.

After receiving the Sangita Siromani Degree, I had the good fortune of studying Ragam, Tanam and Pallavi at the feet of the doyen Mudicondan Venkatarama Iyer. Mysore Vasudevachar, the Bhishmacharya of Karnatic Music, was kind enough to teach me many of his compositions.

My marriage with Shri M. Krishnaswami, who was an Officer in the Parliament Secretariat, in the year 1954, was the turning point in my life. During our stay in Delhi for nearly a decade, I had my musical lessons from the great violinist, Shri T. K. Jayarama Iyer. My first professional public concert was in Delhi in 1954. After we settled down

in Madras, my training under the great Musiri Subrahmanya Iyer started. The years I spent with the uncrowned king of 'Bhava Sangita' may be called the 'golden period' of my musical Sadhana. If I can claim to be a musician of some merit today, the credit goes entirely to Musiri. He was never tired of emphasizing that 'Bhava' was the soul of music. Tyagaraja also stressed this fact when he said *bhaktileni kavi jala varenyulu bhavamu eruga leru* — 'even great poets cannot understand Bhava unless they have devotion.' In music also, Bhakti and Bhava go hand in hand. I also learnt the art of Neraval from him as it was one of his specialities. I can never, therefore, forget this Guru who opened my eyes to the secrets of soulful music.

Music is a vast ocean and no one can claim that he or she has completely mastered it. Learning is a continuous process. I, therefore, continue to be a humble student of the art, still taking guidance from Vidwan Chengalpattu Ranganathan on the subtler aspects of Laya.

Eminent musicians and musicologists who presided over this Conference in the past have given precious advice to the future generation and I am not qualified to add anything new to their suggestions. Yet, I wish to place before you a few impressions gathered during my tutelage under some of the titans of music of this century.

In my opinion, it is wrong to think that there is no room for 'Manodharma' or musical imagination in Sampradaya or tradition. In fact, the touchstone of a musician's calibre is his capacity to display Manodharma within the boundaries of tradition. There is unlimited scope

for Manodharma in Alapana, Neraval, Kalpana Svaras, etc. But it will do incalculable harm to our music if, in the name of Manodharma, the original tunes of Kritis are tampered with. If this practice continues, the original versions of the compositions of master composers like Tyagaraja will soon become unrecognisable. This advice was being constantly dinned into my ears by my Gurus and I am proud of the fact that I have never deviated from the versions taught by them.

Youth Festivals are being conducted to give them the much needed exposure and the newspapers have taken very kindly to them. If I may offer a piece of advice to the younger generation, it is to urge them to maintain the purity of

our tradition and not permit cheap applause and quick success to influence their outlook. Many undesirable features and disturbing trends have started creeping into our music, which we should guard ourselves against, and this is the reason why I am offering this advice.

Hard work, dedication and perseverance are needed for achieving some measure of success in the music field and there is no short cut. I was given only junior chances in this Academy for 11 years before I was promoted to the sub-senior level. It took me eight years more to reach the senior grade. Each performance is a challenge and a test for a musician and even a little remissness or complacency will let him/her down. . . .

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Muthuswami Dikshitar and Vivadi Melas

By

Dr. S. SITA

For making an authentic study of Muthuswami Dikshitar's compositions, the one source-material that has fortunately come down to posterity is the monumental work, the *Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini* of Subbarama Dikshitar, the grandson of Sri Dikshitar's brother. The book is a treasure-house of musical knowledge and gives the notation for all the Kritis and Ragamalikas of Dikshitar along with those of other composers and also valuable notes on Raga Lakshana according to Venkatamakhin's tradition.

An analysis of the contents of *Pradarsini* reveals the following facts relating to the compositions of Dikshitar :

1. Dikshitar composed in all the 72 Melakartas including the Vivadi Melas.
2. The Ragamudras introduced invariably in each of his Kriti in the 72 Melakartas point to his adopting for the most part the list of Mela-names figuring in the Kanakambari-Phenadyuti list using the Katapayadi prefixes. In the case of 5 Melakartas (i.e.) *Sailadesakshi* (35), *Namadesi* (50), *Samala* (55), *Desisimharava* (58) and *Jotiraga* (68), he has adopted the corresponding names from the earlier list, that is, *Sulini*, *Narmada*, *Samalangi*, *Haimavati*, and *Jyotishmati*.

forms and his compositions, deriving inspiration from his Vina music, and also intended them to be rendered to the accompaniment of the divine instrument. The music of the Vina is noted for its melodic excellence, which is achieved significantly by the rich usage of Gamakas peculiar to the instrument and by the adoption of slow tempo. The Sahitya of most of his Kritis is in the form of Stotra or description of the deity of the shrine worshipped by him. Though, as in all true art, Sahitya has a value independent of its own, it serves as a vehicle of the Raga music. The poetic style of his Sahityas with more words and less of vowel extensions is compensated by the long drawn-out tempo (Vilambita laya) of its musical structure, Dhatu. Thus plenty of scope is afforded for raga-expression in its essential details even in his shorter pieces, having only Pallavi and Samashti Charana. The Sahitya in Tyagaraja's style of composition, is couched in a few words, with more scope for vowel extension and musical expression and hence the Madhyama-Kala tempo of his pieces is in perfect consonance with the structure of the Matu. The tempo of the musical setting has thus a greater role in the realisation of the total aesthetic experience, than is generally realised.

SAHITYA'S SCOPE

It is reasonable to suppose that Muthuswami Dikshitar conceived the Raga-

'DEVATA' IN SOUND

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and integrated operation. To Dikshitar, a Raga is a personification of a devata in sound and while his Sahityas breathe the Advaitic philosophy and describe the form of the gods and goddesses, the Dhalu, portrays the form of the Raga Devata, and this picturisation of Raga is very often found to be more enduring in its solemnity and massive conception. He conceives the Raga in its entirety and such a treatment provides the rich canvas for the expression of the profound contents of his sahitya.

Dikshitar's Kritis in the so-called Vivadi Melas form a class and deserve special study. The 72 Melakartas as formulated by Venkatamakhin on the basis of 12 Svarasthanas and 16 Svaranames have provided logical accommodation to the 40 scales having the Vivadi defect, resulting from the presence of one of the two pairs of dissonant combinations each of Ri-Ga and Dha-Ni. According to Venkatamakhin, two notes separated by an interval of one Sruti, are said to be Vivadi or discordant to one another.

*Ekasrutyantaritataa yayostu
Svarayordvayo
Tayormitho Vivaaditvamevam
Sarvaktra Kalpayet*

Svara chap. v. 143

The following pairs of notes viz., Suddha-Ri and Chatusruti-Ri; Sadharana Ga and Antara Ga; Suddha Dha and Chatusruti Dha; Kaisiki Ni and Kakali Ni are Vivadi combinations. When these combinations are sounded simultaneously or in succession, a feeling of discord is produced and the effect is not pleasant as that of the concordant relationship of notes. The occurrence of the Vivadi notes is thus inimical to the production

of the Raga-bhava. Hence Venkatamakhin who was aware of this, has emphatically stated that Vivaditva should be suppressed in Prayogas for the creation of the Raga-Rupa and for the music to be pleasing. He has however not suggested the methods to remedy the defect of Vivadi in these Melas.

*Vivadi Vipareetatvadveerairuktau
Ripoopamaha II
Swaroopamardanam tena prayoge
syaardvivadinaha !
Svaroopamardanaabhava
Geetaraktirna Labhyate II
Svara chap. v. v. 152-3*

*Vivadanam Naam Vaadhyadi
Swarotpaaditarakti
Vinaashakatvam II
Ch. III p. 15. (Sangita Saramrita.)*

Sahaji and Tulaja, quoting Prayogas from the current Lakshya, have stated clearly for some of the Ragas that certain notes do not occur in straight sequence but figure only in Vakragati and that certain Svaras are to be omitted for creating Raga-bhava in full.

Tyagaraja and Muthuswami Dikshitar have composed beautiful pieces in the Vivadi Melas and thereby established the musical excellence of these so-called Vivadi or 'unmusical Melas' and also the validity of the formation of 72 Melakartas.

The six Melas of each of the four Chakras, namely, 1st, 7th, 6th and 12th and the first and last Melas of the remaining eight Chakras give a total of 40 Vivadi Melas in the scheme (24 + 16 = 40). Dikshitar's treatment of these 40 Melas is unique. The Melas, especially of the 1st and 7th Chakras, taking the combination of Suddha Ri and Suddha

Ga and of the 6th and 12th Chakras using the Shatsruti Ri and Antara Ga have been treated by the composer in a masterly manner. It is evident that Dikshitar was guided by the principle that the Raga-form is distinct from the scale form and that the former transcends the Arohana and Avarohana or the scale-form. Mere adherence to the scale-structure alone fails to portray the image of the Raga. The total expression of the raga is to be sought behind the svaras and *not* in the svaras themselves. The interval between the notes of the scale, the sequence in which these intervals are presented and the mode of intoning and duration of them, are in fact the elements that contribute to Raga-expression.

In the handling of Melas with the Vivadi pair of notes Suddha Ri and Suddha Ga (i.e. 1st and 7th Chakras), Dikshitar has adopted the device of eliminating one of the svaras, either *ri* or *ga*, in the arohana krama. And it will be seen that *ga* is more frequently eliminated and the Arohana is *s r m p* and not *s r g m*. Secondly, the Suddha Ri and Suddha Ga occur in Vakra prयोग so that the close proximity between them will be to some extent temporarily avoided. Thus in *Jhalavarali* (39th), *Nabhomani* (40th), *Kumbhini* (41st) and *Ravikriya* (42nd), the Svvara Sancharas in Dikshitar's respective Kritis in them proceed as *s g r g m*, *s g r m*, *s g r g m p* and so on. The Kritis in the 1st Chakra have the Prayogas *s r m*, *s m g r s*, *s m g m*, and one of the svaras is sung in *janta* also in some Melas; for example, *Phenadyuti* has Prayogas with Janta Svaras *m p d p n n s* — *m g g r s*. The Prayogas *s r g m* and *p d n s* are deliberately avoided by Dikshitar in these 12 Melas. Instead Sancharas such as *p d p n n s*,

s. b d p m g g r s, *s m g r s*, *g r g / s*, *s r / M*, *s M*, *s r s M*, *s p m p* and so on figure. Also *p d n s* in a straight sequence is absent in all the Melas taking Suddha Dha and Suddha Ni. Instead *p d s*, *p d d s*, *p n n s*, *p s n d*, *s n d s* and so on are found. It is interesting that Dikshitar has introduced in the Avarohana krama, the regular sequence in the combinations of Suddha Ri and Suddha Ga and Suddha Dha and Suddha Ni, as can be seen from his respective Kritis in the Ragas. In the descending sequences as in *s n d p* and *m g r s*, *ni* and *ga* are mostly sung with gamaka from *dha* and *ri* and the *ni* introduction of grace somewhat minimises the Vivadi dosha.

The 12 Melas figuring in the 6th and 12th Chakras take Shatsruti Ri and Antara Ga. In this category, the most popular Raga Nata is found. As in the case of Suddha Ri and Suddha Ga, here also either Shatsruti Ri or Antara Ga is dropped either in the Arohana or Avarohana. In *'Kalavati Kamalāsana-yuvati'* (Kalavati, 31st), the Prayogas *s m r s*, *m G r g m m R s*, *m r g m r s* figure. In Gangatarangi Kritis, *s R g M s r g m r g m r s*, *m r R s s*, *m m r r s s* are found. *'Svetaganapatim'* in Ragachudamani contains the following phrases—*S m g m r s s p p m R s s m s g m p p m m r s*. Sailadesakshi is interesting as found in *d s g s p d s n p s m r s s m g p d s s n d s n p m R*. It is more or less uniformly found that in the Melas with Shad-Ri and Antara Ga, the Arohana permits the usage *s r g m* in certain sequences, while the Avarohana permits one of the two and the phrases are *s n p m R*, *p m m R*, *p m g m R* and so on. The same rule holds good for Melas taking Shad Dha and Kakali Ni. In such Melas, Dikshitar has introduced

p n s, *p n d n s*, *p D s*, *p s n d s* in Arohana and *s n P*, *s d p*, *s p d n p* in Avarohana Prayogas. Instances are available in his Kritis viz., *Viravasanta Tyagaraja. Nagabharanam nagajabharanam, Sri Krishnam bhaja re, Swaminatha paripalaya, Naraharimasraye* (18th), *Chidambara Natarajam* (6th). *Himagirikumari* (42), and *Vamsavati Sivayuvati* (54th). The two notes Shad Ri and Shad Dha are usually handled by the composer with a long shake from *sa* and *pa*, the two stable notes of the scale. In Santanamanjari (67th), *ga* is deleted in the Avarohana and the following Sancharas are available in the kriti : *s r s M p D s p g m r s m P m r s*. In Joti raga (68), in the Avarohana, *g* is omitted as in the phrase *s d m g s* — *p m M g s*. Sometimes the Vakra Sancharas are deliberately used in the Ragas Dhautapanchama (69) and Nasa-mani (70) — *s n d p-m r g s s r g s*.

Of the 40 Melas the following eight Melas are characterised by the maximum Vivadi character, Kanakambari (1st), Tanukiriti (6th), Kalavati (31st),

Chalanata (36th), Saugandhini (37th), Ravikriya (42nd), Dhautapanchama (69th), and Rasamanjari (72nd). In each of the above, two pairs of Vivadi combinations, one each of *ri-ga* and *dha-ni* combinations occur and the Kritis of Dikshitar in these Melas reflect his genius, Vakra prayogas, Janta Svvara Sancharas and plenty of Gamakas are employed with special significance in these Ragas by the composer in his Kritis. Rasamanjari raga includes a number of Vakra Prayogas such as *p p r g s-p n d n-s R R s n d n-s p m p n d n-s n d n p p-p r g s* and this raga suffers from the maximum Vivaditva, taking as it does Shatsruti *ri* and *Dha*, Antara *Ga* and Kakali Nishada svaras besides Pratimadhyama. Similarly Kanakambari and Saugandhini, taking Suddha Ri — Suddha Ga, Suddha-Dha and Suddha-Ni, have been endowed with charm by Dikshitar's treatment of them in a unique way. His approach always takes into consideration the gestalt of a Raga and its sonal content in its totality and is not defined by the measure of its Arohana and Avarohana.

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CHATURDANDI PRAKASIKA 'Speaks'

"The Dikshitar family adhered to the Sampradaya of Venkatamakhi. The success was only partial. Present day musicians praise the system but few persons would have glanced inside the book... If the **Chaturdandi Prakasika** had been published a century earlier, the course of the present music would have been entirely different."

— Dr. T. S. Ramakrishnan

"Venkatamakhin (c. 1635/1660), second son of Govinda Dikshitar of Tanjore authored me. Description of seventy-two scales, their corresponding Raganga Ragas and Upanga and Bhashanga Janya Ragas are given. Lakshana and Lakshya gitas, tanas and prabhandas are provided to illustrate the karta ragas.

"In 1646, the Nawab of Golkonda invaded and the Nayak ruler of Tanjore had to flee. In 1673, he was killed in a battle and there was consequent political anarchy in the Tanjore area. To ensure my safety, like Panna Dai, the loyal nurse secreting Udai Singh, the infant son of Rana Sangha of Chitor in Rajasthan, I was taken into secret custody by —

Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar of Tiruvidaimarudur and Govinda Dikshita, both descendants of Venkatamakhin and the Sankaracharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam at Kumbakonam.

"When I was under such anonymity, there was a development which affected much my future though not my life which was safe inside an incubator! Govindacharya of Kavattaram brought out his *Sangita Sastra Samkshepa* or *Sangita Chudamani* inspired by Akhalanka and published it with the help of the Tanjore Palace. Seventy-two melakarta ragas were named in accordance with the '*Kangipriya*' nomenclature. Raganga ragas of Venkatamakhin and their janyas came to be treated janyas of the melakarta ragas. This received wide currency in the Tanjore belt and Tyagaraja is stated to have had a copy of it and used it in his compositions. Lavani Venkata Rao composed the '*Bahattara Melakarta Malika*' in accordance with it and published it. Chandragiri Rangacharlu composed three hundred lakshana gitas — one for each of the ragas enumerated by Govindacharya. Tachur Stngaracharyulu Brothers fully published the Akhalanka tradition without acknowledgement towards the close of the last century or the beginning of the present.

"I would have remained still-born or left in the forgotten incubator but for Ramaswami Dikshitar (1735-1817) receiving me from Muddu Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar during the chance meeting at Manali. Muthuswami Dikshitar (1776-1835) and later Subbarama Dikshitar (1839-1906) tried their best to repair the wrong features that had crept into the system during my 'affectionate incarceration'.

"The Akhalanka-Govindacharya system known as the *Kanakangi-Ratnangi* System had taken roots and is predominantly in use now."

A REPORT

Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri Birth Centenary

(Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri Birth Centenary Celebrations add one more feather in the cap of Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore. This time it has spread its wings to Madras, organising a 5-day Celebrations jointly with the Madras Kendra of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. In addition the Centre also conducted the 3rd Seminar on Thaalavaadyas. Published below are excerpts from the Report.)

The Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri Birth Centenary celebrated by the Percussive Arts Centre, Bangalore under joint auspices with the Madras Kendra of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, at the Bhavan's Auditorium, Madras, from 17th to 21st November, 1993, was a landmark in the history of the Arts Centre.

The Inaugural Session commenced with a Poornakumbha Swagatha, a Vedaghosha, followed by the rendition of Sastri's *Jayathi Jayathi Bharatha Matha*' (Khamas).

In his eloquent welcome address, Justice M. M. Ismail, Chairman, Madras Kendra, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, expressed his happiness over the Bhavan being involved in organising an event of this type and wondered how an organisation in Bangalore took up the initiative in this event. He stated that Viswanatha Sastri hailed from the same place where Kambar was born, Terizhandur village, near Mayavaram, now Mayuram, and that was another reason how he was involved in this function. He was extremely happy to associate himself with the Art Centre and the Celebrations.

Bangalore K. Venkataram, the Executive Director, Percussive Arts Centre, presented a brief report of the Centre and explained the multifarious activities of the centre like presenting Palghat

Mani Iyer and Palani Subramanya Pillai awards annually, and organising symposia, Seminars and Thaalavaadyothsavs and publications on Thaalavaadya and Laya : Earlier, as part of the Centenary of Mayuram Sastri in Bangalore, 8 artistes rendered 30 compositions. A list of about another 260 compositions has been detailed in the souvenir brought on the occasion. Venkataram stated that, as part of the Inter-State Cultural Exchange of artistes, this festival provided an opportunity for artistes from Karnataka and Tamilnadu to get together on a common concert dais.

Sangeetha Kalanidhi B. Rajam Iyer, President, Carnatic Musicians Forum of India, after lighting the lamp and inaugurating the celebrations, narrated the qualifications of a Vaggeyakara and observed that Mayuram Sastri had composed in rare Ragas in those days and a good number of compositions of aesthetically good quality.

Sangeetha Kalarathna R. K. Srikanthan, Veteran vocalist and Chairman, Advisory Council of the Art Centre, in his Presidential address lauded the services of Sastriar and called on the musicians to sing more of his compositions and popularise the same. A number of concerts for three days highlighted the celebrations.

A significant feature was the Symposium on the "Art and Music of Mayuram

Shastri" held on Sunday, 21-11-1993 morning. The participants, T. S. Parthasarathy, noted music scholar and Secretary, Madras Music Academy, P. C. Jayaraman of *Sruti*, K. S. Mahadevan, Art Critic, and R. Kuppuswamy Iyer, brother of Mayuram Sastriar, all eulogised the artistry of Sastri. S. Rajam's paper was read by V. Kalavathy and that of T. R. Vaithiswaran read by Bangalore Venkataram.

In his presidential address, Sangeetha Kalanidhi Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer recalled the variety of items composed by Sastriar and the Foreword he wrote on the book published by Sastriar. He also recalled his singing in the AIR, Trichy of the famous *Jayathi Jayathi*, and the later disc recorded by GNB. While appreciating the laudable efforts of Sastriar in composing in Tamil language at a time when Tamil was considered unsuitable for classical Krithis, Semmangudi cautioned rasikas on undue importance attached to language in classical music. Music itself is a universal language and fanaticism in language should be discouraged. In this century when several centenaries are observed it was good that centenaries of musicians like Mayuram Sastriar, Dwararam and Chowdiah are celebrated. He praised the efforts in Karnataka like the Chowdaiah Memorial Hall and Palghat Mani Iyer Memorial Art Centre and lamented that such efforts are not there in other states. Except a few streets named after Musiri, Sivan, many more great men of music are not even remembered. Semmangudi had a special word of appreciation for the Art Centre in their honouring great percussionists and in organising useful seminars, Thaalavaadyothsavs and releasing publications of useful material.

Penultimate concert was a delectable vocal recital by Rukmini Pushpavanam (Sastriar's niece) supported by M. Balakrishna on violin and V. Krishna on Mrudanga.

In his scholarly Valedictory address, the elder statesman C. Subramaniam appreciated the joint organisation of such a Centenary of a great musician composer. He observed that the four states of the South — Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra and Kerala should join together to make this a South Indian Festival. C. Subramaniam also observed that he hoped many more festivals would be organised this way and wished that this would be a beginning. He recalled the services of Mayuram Sastri as a great composer and stated that all great composers were devotees of God, soaked in music and experts in the grammar of the language in which they composed. C. Subramaniam recalled the greatness of Saint Tyagaraja and said that his compositions revealed his Ramabhakthi. Sastri being recognised by the Music Academy in 1931 was also remembered.

Presiding over the valedictory session T. T. Vasu, President, Madras Music Academy, stated that the 19th Century seemed to have produced a large number of great men who distinguished themselves in many walks of life and their birth centenaries are being celebrated during the present century. Particularly among music composers in Karnatak music, centenaries of Nilalakanta Sivan, Mysore Vasudevachar, Tiger Varadachariar, Muthaiah Bhagavathar and others deserve mention. Mayuram Viswanatha Sastri born in 1893 belonged to this galaxy of musicians and was a prolific composer of every conceivable type of musical com-

position, which exceed 500 and some of them are yet to be collected and printed. During his life time, he himself published more than ten volumes with notation and notes. Music Academy, he said, was the first to recognise his merit as a Composer when his Sanskrit Krithi on Bharatha Mata was adjudged as best by Judges including Tiger and T. L. Venkatarama Iyer. This was sung by Semmangudi on AIR on the First Independence Day. Sastri was a staunch nationalist and composed on patriotic themes. He followed closely models set by Subramanya Bharathi and composed on Bharathamaatha, National flag and Mahatma Gandhi.

The concluding concert was by S. Shankar who rose to the occasion and gave a highly delectable vocal recital accompanied by H. K. Venkataram on violin Umayalpuram K. Sivaraman on Mrudanga and Bangalore K. Venkataram on Ghata.

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SEMINAR ON THAALAVAADYAAS-3

A 3-day seminar on Thaalavaadyaas was also organised under the same joint auspices at the same venue (18th to 20th November, 1993). The Seminar, the third of its kind, was to highlight the instruments Taval (Dolu), Morching and Gethuvaadya. The purpose has been to generate authentic data on these for posterity for possible Development and publication and provide material for Research.

Violin maestro, Kunnakkudi R. Vaidyanathan, Chairman, Tamilnadu Iyal Isai Nataka Manram, in his scholarly Inaugural address referred to the all-pervasive aspects of Laya, prevalent everywhere in the Universe like Chandra gathi, Suryagathi, Nakshathra gathi and

observed that any minute change in this results in flood, gale and thunder and so on. Right from the breathing of Man, tempo is prevalent even in the normal speaking of persons. He referred to 'sol', 'shabda' in Chandas and recalled an interesting instance of the great poet Kannadasan composing for the Thavil Valayapatti's line — rendition as mnemonics. He referred to the Thavil play to Nagaswara Alapana and the Laya in Ragas-Alapana. In such great service the centre is rendering to the field of Laya, it is not only the public, but even the Vidwans should support and assist the Centre by their co-operation and active involvement, said Kunnakkudi.

After a delightful nagaswara recital by Bangalore M. Kodandaraman with Thavil by Thanjavur T. R. Govindarajan, a paper on Needamangalam Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai, the Thavil wizard, whose birth centenary is round the corner, was read by Bangalore K. Venkataram. In his paper he stated that the very term 'Thavilkaarar' in Tamil Nadu indicated none but him. It was Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer who said "It is enough to simply say Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai. This single word would speak the whole history of Thavil."

A highly educative Dolu (Thavil) display by Thanjavur T. R. Govindarajan was highlighted by the narration of the noted musicologist, B. M. Sundaram, of Pondicherry. Reference was made to the starting of Thavil play with the syllable 'Thom' and the very first phase would end with a gathi bheda, thus introducing the Laya vishaya even during the first spell of his play. It was explained how the Thavil is the first and foremost instrument to portray the beauties

of Laya Vyavahaara and rightly called the Raja Vaadya by our ancestors.

On 19-11-93, a paper was presented by Dr. N. Somanathan of the Central Leather Research Institute, Bio-Physics Lab, Madras, on studies on Thavil which was noteworthy for the highly sophisticated study and the analysis on scientific lines of the aspects of Skins and leathers used. Another paper was presented on Morsing by B. Rajasekhar on behalf of his father Bangalore L. Bhimachar, a veteran Morching player. He referred to the tribals of Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Hill tribes of Deccan using this instrument from time immemorial. Reference to this in ancient texts were also cited. A recital of Morching-tarang was the highlight wherein L. Bhimachar, B. Rajasekhar and B. Bhagyalakshmi chose Mohana for their display.

A demonstration of the manufacture of Dolu by the veteran manufacturer Thiruvaiyaru Govindaraja Pillai with narrations by B. M. Sundaram marked

the highly developed system of the manufacture of the instrument in several stages from the Katta, Valais, Leather parchments, connecting straps, Modiram, Valayam, Venaiyam, Padam etc.

Avudaiyarkoil H. Subramanyam presented a paper on Gethuvaadya on 20.11.1993 tracing the advent and history of this rare and disappearing instrument. He explained the mechanism and functioning of instrument and then demonstrated the play accompanying a Vocal recital of S. Shankar. Mythical and scriptural references were also stated. B. M. Sundaram presented a paper on "Some Eminent Laya Vaadyakaaraas" referring to several instrumentalists in Dolu, Morching and Gethu. The concluding session was an Open House discussion participated by Dr. N. Ramanathan, R. Vedavalli, K. S. Kalidas, Umayalpuram Sivaraman, B. M. Sundaram and Bangalore K. Venkataram. Several technical problems were discussed and an interesting dialogue between the participants brought out ideas and theories.



Bangalore Gayana Samaja-Silver Jubilee Conference

"Vaggeya Vaibhava" was the theme of the Silver Jubilee Music Conference of the Bangalore. Gayana Samaja, held from 5th to 12th December 1993 at Dr. H. N. Kalakshetra, Bangalore, the other highlight being "Pallavis." Inaugurated by the doyen of Karnatak Music Sri Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, the conference conferred the title of Sangeetha Kala Rathna on R. Chandrasekhariah, the eldest of the Mysore Brothers.

The conference brought to light many views on the theme. While V. R. Kulkarni, Director, Kannada & Culture, Government of Karnataka observed that the musicians should sing more of Kannada songs, Dr. V. Doreswamy Iyengar categorically stated that Sahitya in a music concert has necessarily to be secondary to Sangeetha. He did not mean that the text could be pronounced wrongly, but the emphasis should be only on music and not Sahitya. A

significant suggestion Dr. Iyengar made was regarding the award of Doctorates in music. It shall be 'Practical' oriented, and not 'ext oriented' as at present. As an example, he suggested, that one could choose a Raga like Nattakuranji and analyse all the types of compositions available, the salient features of the Alapana and Niravals & Swara aspects and present a documentation which could deserve a Doctoral degree.

As the Conference president R. Chandrasekhariah was himself a Vaggeyakara, and to fit in with the theme of the Conference, several Kritis of Vaggeyakaras like Ramaswamy Dikshitar, T. Chowdiah, Veena Kuppa Iyer, Rallapalli Ananthakrishna Sharma, Ponniah Pillai, Muthiah Bhagavathar, Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer, Musical opera of Tyagaraja *Prahalada Bhakthi Vijayam* and compositions of R. Chandrasekhariah were presented.

The other feature being Pallavi, and Ashtothhara Shatatala Pallavi composed by Chandrasekhariah, a Marga Tala Pallavi, Ratta Pallavis, Nada Pallavis, were also rendered. There was also symposium on Sources, Resources & Motivations of Composing (Dr. R. Sathyanarayana); Techniques of Composing (Prof. V. Ramarathnam); Tradition & Modern Composing (Prof. R. N. Doreswamy) & Modern Compositions : Critics and Connoisseurs' Views (T. V. Muthacharya).

Music concerts in the evening, where juniors also were presented and a study Circle dealing with an Ashtothhara Shata Tala Pallavi (Chandhathputa) formed part of the usual features.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PERCUSSION ENSEMBLES

Study of the percussions, as is in use, in the West & East is by itself an interesting and enlightening aspect. Though the Indian view of percussions has mostly been a 'Supportive role', often we come across percussion ensembles like Yakshagana, Kathakali, Panchavadyas and so on, mostly as an open-air rendition and not in indoor concert platform. Compared to the West, where Drum Ensembles are quite common, it has not been so here, at least in India. The individual identity of Percussion has not been put to ample use. In this context, the recent innovations and recitals of exclusive percussion ensembles are a step in the direction of establishing the independent role of percussions themselves, similar to those in the African and Western countries.

The Percussive Arts Centre, the organisation working exclusively for Documentation and Promotion of percussions in this country, organised a unique Comparative Study of the Indian & Western ensembles of this kind. The OKUTA percussion Trio from Germany performed with the Bangalore-based LAYA LAHARI percussion group on 26th November 1993 at the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Bangalore.

The music of the OKUTA PERCUSSION trio is a distinctive blend of different musical traditions, reflecting the multi-cultural musical education of the members of the trio. The members were : Tunji Beier, a German born in Papua New Guinea, grew up in Nigeria and Australia; studied traditional Yoru-

ba instruments (in Nigeria) and later had an exposure to Indian percussions mridangam, ghatam, thavil (Dolu) & Morsing at the Karnataka College of Percussions in Bangalore; Rabi Ayan-dokun descends from a long line of Yoruba 'BATA' drummers from West-ern Nigeria, equally proficient in the Bata and the Dundun (talking drums), Ron Reeves, born in Australia & living in Indonesia plays as a freelance percus-sionist in symphony orchestras, jazz groups etc. The OKUTA Percussion was founded in Sydney in 1986 and the present members have been playing since 1991.

The music of LAYA LAHARI percus-sion group of Ayyanar College of Music, Bangalore has been in existence from 1981, formed by the lead given by the veteran musician Anoor S. Ramakrish-na. Bangalore K. Venkataram, another noted percussionist is also actively in-volved in this. The group has 12 mem-bers playing instruments-Mrudanga, Khanjari (Kanjira), Ghata, Tabla, Mor-ching, Dolu (Thavil), Chande, Makkale, Pakhwaj, Sammela, Konagalu (Oral re-citation of the mnemonics), Gethu & Dolak.

The Comparative Study programme commenced with an introduction on the attempts and a formal welcome by Bangalore K. Venkataram.

The First item of the programme was an impromptu exposition of Laya Vinyas by the Laya Lahari troupe participated by Anoor Dattatreya Sharma (Mridan-ga), V. Krishna (Khanjari) & (Konagolu), B. R. Ravikumar (Ghata), T. Srinivas (Tabla), Anoor Ananthakrishna Sharma (Chande & Sammela), R. Sathyakumar

(Dolki), B. Dhruvaraj (Pakhwaj) & L. Bhimachar (Morching) & Bangalore K. Venkataram (Gethuvadya), H. S. Su-dheendra (Maddale), A. Somashekar (Konagolu) & A. V. Kashinath (Dolu).

The Okuta group presented three items. The first, a 'Bata ensemble' in-cluding instruments Omele (Tunji), lyailu (Rabia) & Emcle Abo (Ron), a traditional piece of Yoruba Bata music in praise of OGUN, god of Iron. The Second, entitled 'Tala Bala', was an Okuta composition using two Balafons (Tunji & Ron). Next titled 'Tiga Men-yata' literally meaning 'Three-in-one', another original Okuta composition aimed at 'fusion' using the Kendang, an In-donesian instrument (handled very de-ftly by Ron), Dundun, an instrument in Yoruka Bata music (Rabi) and Thavil, an Indian temple instrument (Tunji).

There was a lively discussion bet-ween the members of two groups on the different aspects of the usage of these percussions, their scope and limi-tations etc.

Finally, there was an effort by both the groups to 'fuse' the various per-cussions. This was done by joining together of all the artistes by setting a theme-base responded to by all and culminating in a grand finale. The Laya Lahari & Okuta used Cachons, used in Peruvian & Spanish music and also the Serekere.

It was certainly an interesting com-parison of the two independent styles of percussion-play.

Bangalore K. Venkataram

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NEW YEAR BONANZA — January 1994

8.1.1994 Saturday 5.30 p.m.	Shri M. S. Gopalakrishnan & Smt. M. Narmada Shri R. Ramesh Shri V. Suresh	— Violin Duet — Mridangam — Ghatam
9.1.1994 Sunday 5.30 p.m.	Shri T. N. Seshagopalan Shri V. V. Ravi Shri R. Ramesh Shri V. Suresh	— Vocal Recital — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam

March Programmes

12.3.1994 Saturday 6.00 p.m.	Mandolin Srinivas	— Mandolin Recital
13.3.1994 Sunday 6.00 p.m.	Shri Trichur V. Ramachandran	— Vocal Recital

Accompaniments

Shri Delhi Sundararajan	— Violin
Shri Vellore Ramabhadran	— Mridangam
Shri E. M. Subramaniam	— Ghatam

Programmes Sponsored By

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MAY 1994

21.5.1994 Saturday 6.00 p.m.	Bombay S. Jayashri Shri Vittal Ramamurthy Shri Neyveli R. Narayanan Shri A. S. Shankar	: Vocal Recital : Violin : Mridangam : Ghatam
22.5.1994 Sunday 6.00 p.m.	Dr. N. Ramani Shri R. Thyagarajan (son) Master Athulkumar (grandson) Shri Mysore M. Manjunath Shri Yella Venkateswara Rao Shri Selva Ganesh	: Flute Trio (First time in Bombay) : Violin : Mridangam : Kanjira

Venue :

Indian Gymkhana Grounds, Matunga (C.Rly.), Bombay-400 019.

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**NATIONAL INTEGRATION PROGRAMMES
CARNATIC & HINDUSTANI MUSIC RECITALS
FEBRUARY 1994**

19.2.1994 Saturday 6.00 p.m.	Shri Panangudi S. Ramachandran Shri Kandadevi Alagiriswamy Shri Kamalakar Rao	: Carnatic Vocal Recital : Violin : Mridangam
20.2.1994 Sunday 6.00 p.m.	Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas & Party	: Hindustani Vocal Recital

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APRIL 1994

2.4.1994 Saturday 6.00 p.m.	Smt. Bangalore V. Vijayalakshmi Shri Vizag M. S. N. Murthy Shri Vijayanagaram P. Satishkumar	: Carnatic Vocal Recital : Violin : Mridangam
3.4.1994 Sunday 6.00 p.m.	Shri Sanjeev Abhyankar & Party	: Hindustani Vocal Recital

Venue :
S.I.E.S. School Hall, Matunga, Bombay-400 019.

CULTURAL SCENE IN BOMBAY

National integration is the need of the hour and one's efforts may be channeled through any medium to attain it. A sure-success is the medium of fine arts. Especially music, the melody of which captivates one and all; and our music, classical specially, is Raga-pradhana. It knows no barrier of language, region or religion, caste or creed.

Shanmukhananda Sabha has been gearing its efforts towards promoting National Integration through music at various levels — of stalwart performers, from Talent promotion plank and at students' level. The cultural synthesis that could accrue from such efforts could be perceived in the concerts it has presented from time to time. One such programme was the Veena recital by S. Ravindran and Hindustani vocal by Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan.

A famous figure in the cultural scene of the metropolis, the Ustad has charmed many rasikas with his Ghazals and playback singing. But he is equally a supremo in classical music what with his melodious, resonant voice with amazing volume and reach, power and pliance. Scion of the Rampur-Sahawan Gharana, and Chela of Ustad Nissar Hussain Khan, Mustafa Khan has evolved a style of his own, steeped in mastery over the Sur and Laya with a powerful delivery.

Singing for a predominantly South Indian audience he chose Ragas which have close allies in the South, such as Pooriya Dhanashree (Pantavarali), Dur-

ga (Suddha Saveri), Desh and Bhairavi (Sindhu Bhairavi). It was a rich experience to listen to the various facets of expansive Vilambit, the intricate Drut, both dotted with Bol Alaps, Bol Taans and Sargam improvisations. One distinctive feature of the Ustad's rendition was the *Uchcharan* that was unmangled — a characteristic very rare to come by among Hindustani musicians. One could follow the Sahitya line, however short or meagre it may be and feel the essence and evocation of it in the melodic design.

Opening Pooriya Dhanashree in the majestic bass he established the vitality and grandeur of the Raag in a leisurely Vilambit. The gradual development of the Khayal, over an expansive canvas spanning nearly two octaves, lit up now and then with radiant Taan-patterns and Sargams elevated the spirit and splendour of his music. He seemed to reveal in the Sargams which have now been assimilated into Hindustani shaily as an integral part of the concert culture. The Drut Khayal got on to a romantic spirit weaving through the lyrics *Payaliya jhankar* where the Ustad's delineation of *Piya Samjave Samjath nahin* indicated a tonal plea, an emotive colouring.

Durga, dedicated to goddess Durga, had a devotional fervour dovetailing the benign elegance and Veera Rasa. The splendour and subtlety, so natural to this mode, came through the Bada and Chota Khayals. Though its corresponding mode in Karnatak music is Suddha Saveri, Shades of Arabhi could be discernible — a factor that goes with all

approbation in the northern style in the name of artistic liberty.

Desh, which has almost become a national mode, after its popularisation through DD network, was another sensitive Raga that touched the heart. The composition, *Baathu baath me beeth gaye raath* wove through highly classical and light classical avenues touching the subtle and the sublime in the mode.

It was the Ustad's Ram Bhajan in Bhairavi that stroked one's heartstrings. He poured out his devotion from the heart. It testified to what extent a simple Bhajan could be improvised in classical mould evoking Bhakti bhava. Incidentally, the same Bhajan, along with the one he snag on Krishna moved the Jeer of Ahobila Mutt and the devotees at Shanmukhananda when he rendered it before the Pontiff who visited the Hall in December.

Giving Sangat to him were Liaquat Ali Khan (Sarangi), Mashkoor Khan (Harmonium) and Sultan Ghulam Niazi (Tabla). The tonal balance that the Tabalchi maintained helped highlight the musical enunciation.

Ravindran too is not new to Bombay. An active member of the Sabha till recently, the Vainika (settled now in Madras) is a versatile instrumentalist who has mastered the Mridangam, Violin besides being a Vocalist and that his concert was in the traditional mould, true to Vainika-Gayaka form, and straying little into orchestral forays goes without saying. While giving the Sahitya due weight in intonation one found in Ravindran one of the rare instrumentalists who gave importance to Niraval, a factor fast

disappearing from instrumentalists' performing code.

Placidity and serenity marked his Pantuvarali and Kharaharapriya which were dealt with in detail. Bhadrachala Ramadas' *Ennagaanu Rama bhajana* and Swati Tirunal's *Satatam Taavaka* glowed in their poised aesthetics. Niraval in the former and Tanamalika in the latter added sustenance and colour. Spontaneity in Swaras with crisp intricacy helped the percussion pair — his son Venkateswaran (Mridangam) and Nemani Somayajulu (Ghatam) conserve their flair for 'Kanakku' to the Thani.

Trained at the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya by K. R. Crandramauli and honed to concertcraft by Karaikudi Mani of Madras, Venkateswaran has emerged as a well-equipped concert artiste. And his enthusiasm at times overshadowed the Ghatam, who bided his time for Thani and sent his darts of excellence. Their Thani was a tight-rope walk on Laya-line which they splendidly did.

The reopening of Pandal Cutcheri in November served the audience a variety of pure, tradition-oriented and one touched up with spicy artistry and aesthetics. O. S. Tyagarajan, fast scaling high stuck to purity of tradition, in a pace slow and graceful which is becoming rarer in this jet-set era. And T. V. Sankaranarayanan, the top-notch melodist who never tires of singing, nor lets his robust Vocalism ware out, enthralled his packed pandal audience. TVS is one of the few maestros who has perfect Sruti alignment and with his Sarvalaghu ease one finds him often involved in musical depths, singing to his heart's fill. But for the public address

system which now and then augmented the sound to noise level, the concert was as usual an enjoyable entertainment.

Hamsadhwani, Pantuvarali, Charukesi and Bhairavi made good selections, while he cut short his RTP Mohanam.

"O, Rangasayi" — how many sing this Sriranga Pancharatnam that Saint Tyagaraja composed in Kambhoji in the pace that brings out the blend of the bhava of the Raga and Sahitya? In this era of jet set pace, this kriti has also joined the numbers of "galloping entertainers" where performers use their skill and craft to carve out Kambhoji through the Sahitya designs, little heeding to the agony that is inherent in the composer's plea. The impress of the song is in the Vilamba kala and in fine-tuned gamaka and not of the virulent tempo. The bhava of Kambhoji automatically blooms in such clime. For one, the Rasikas had a rich experience of this soul elevating kriti in the rendition of O. S. Thiagarajan who is fast emerging as a class performer.

His total involvement and insight into the deeper nuances of music earned him a 'Shabhash!' from the audience. His was a heart-filling traditional cutcheri, covering all facets with an aesthetic vision and sincerity of purpose. The feel of the Raga and the song was in his tone, timbre and tempo and he added to the phase of Niraval-Swaras a substantive weight.

O. S. Thiagarajan's repertoire comprised a really lofty *Meru Samaadhira* (Mayamalava-gowla), a rare gem of Arabhi (*Amba Jagadamba*) that shone

in a new sheen, a magnificent *Karpaga Manohara* (Malayamarutham) and the Ragam-Taanam Pallavi in Sankarabharanam dedicated to the Paramacharya of Kanchi.

Enriching both the vocalists were M. Chandrasekharan (Violin), whose vocalised violin play is always a listener's pleasure. Needless to say his had a flavour all its own. On the percussion were Tiruvarur Bhaktavatsalam and Palghat Sundaram the Mridangam-Ghatam pair who played with gusto spinning elaborate korvais with laya intricacies adding their own dimension.

The New Year concerts on January 8th and 9th were dedicated to Kanchi Paramacharya. As the concert of melodist M. S. Gopalakrishnan and daughter Narmada started, at the Indian Gymkhana grounds, news of the Paramacharya attaining 'mukti' reached the 'Pandal'; in the midst of shock, it was decided to dedicate the concert to the memory of the Sage who so fondly preached the soul of music for promoting the integration of humanity.

A mellowed MSG got into poignant depths portraying Purvi Kalyani, Todi and Kirvane in their evocative bhava. The soft touch melody enhanced the beauty of his music while revealing an inner poise. If the compositions *Paramapavana Rama*, *Ninne Nammi Naanu* and the Ragam Tanam Pallavi had some Sangathees with artistic flourishes, as he dueted with his daughter who showed a firm hand and assertive mind, the facet of much neglected Niraval played by him was very much appreciated. The Pallavi in its multi-hued elaboration had the Kalpana swaras neatly dovetail-

ed. Marked for its beauty and sheen was Hamir Kalyani he wove.

Narmada who is doing research in Ragas for her doctorate has matured into an artiste in her own right and within the parameters of Parur Bani she came out with her individuality. Her Sriranjani was a good testimony.

So much of Vidwat, so much of Manodharma and so rich and resonant a vocal power, topped with selections rare and apt for the Anjali mood. Yet the concert of T. N. Seshagopalan remained within concert periphery and not transcended to soul-elevating reach, why? Pyrotechnics overpowered the 'soul', the bhava notwithstanding. Between Saukhyam and showmanship, glow and glitter, it was the latter that overwhelmed. Result? One felt that the great musician who did soul searching into the music could have discreetly presented the pearls he collected and not wasted in showmanship.

Nagaswaravali (*Sri Sankara Guruvaram*), Hindolam (*Tunaiपुरிந்தரல்*), Sankarabharanam (*Akshayaling vibho*), — the Raga, the kritis, the swaras were good in parts. If one measured his concert in terms of artistic virtosity, his Sindhu Bhairavi was a treat. But to treat a mode of deep pathos, poignance, in a frolicsome Vinyasa could only be counter-productive.

And when violinist V. V. Ravi had hard time coping with his 'Kanakku' the Vocalist could have settled to a Sarvalaghu stride. Ramesh-Suresh's percussion (Mridangam-Ghatam) was high-toned touching the realm of noise at times.

Savants' Days have been great events in the metropolis and Sabhas, big or small, have been paying their musical homage with reverence. Shanmukhananda Sangeetha Sabha celebrated Dikshitar Day on December 4th, 1993, unmediately following the solema occasion of the 45th Jeer of the Ahobila Mutt gracing the Sabha, conducting Lord Krishna's Dolotsava to the melodious rendering of sacred compositions by students of the Sabha's Sangeetha Vidyalaya and the great Ustad Ghulam Mustafa Khan.

Most of the young participants were prize winners in one competition or the other conducted annually by the Sabha and in presenting them the Sabha not only gave the talents an exposure but also had an opportunity to assess them on a public forum. It was heartening that most of them fared well and showed promise, performing with the accompaniments.

Radhika and Ranjani who are making their mark as violinists are equally proficient in Vocal. The elder Radhika has bagged the first prize in the AIR competition for Violin and won the Kuthuvilakku prize in Vocal in the annual competition for 1992-93, besides a few other prizes. In a wafer thin voice perched on quite a high pitch, the sisters rendered the Savant's *Shakti Ganapati* (Mohanam), *Mamava Meenakshi* (Varali), *Kayarohanam* (Abheri), etc.

Kumari Vidya (a student of the Vidyalaya learning under Smt. R. Sakuntala) acquitted herself creditably, singing *Gananayakam* (Rudrapriya), *Marakata-vallim* (Kambhoji) etc.

Undeterred by soar throat R. Kalyanaraman, a talented vocalist doing his Diploma in Music (under Smt. Kalyani Sharma) negotiated his voice through *Meenakshi* (Purvi Kalyani), *Hiranmayim* (Lalitha).

It was very heartening to note that a product of IIT was also a proficient musician. In fact, his mastery over the violin, especially the technique of bowing and fingering he has devised for himself, revealed a mind full of imagination and aesthetic perception. That is R. Madhavan who played a solo, besides accompanying a few and in whose style there was a fusion of 'Nayam' and 'Layam'. His *Annapurne* (Sama), *Kashi Visalakshi* (Purvi Kalyani) and *Santhanagopalam* (Khamas) were outstanding.

The Veena quartet — Rupa, Rohini, Shobha and Vasanthi (students of Smt. Mangalam Muthuswamy) did a neat job playing *Sarasijanabha* (Nagagandhari) *Sri Lakshmi Varaham* (Abhogi) among other Kritis.

The session was concluded with the senior vocal quartet (of the Diploma class under Smt. Kalyani Sharma — Rama Krishnaswamy, Bhavani Srinivasan, Asha and Archana — on a solemn note. There was a "classical purity and traditional grandeur" in their rendering, to quote a connoisseur. The kritis they rendered were *Karikalabhamukham* (Saveri), *Kashi Visalakshi* (Purvi Kalyani) and *Tyagarajaya Namasthe* (Begada).

In the Talent Exposure concerts, R. Sheela (a student of Smt. R. Sakuntala, one of the senior teachers trained under Musiri Subramania Iyer), and Janaki Krishnamurthy, a senior student of Smt. Kalyani Sharma and Dr. Anupa Deogaonkar (a student of Pandit Kartick Kumar) were featured in October, 1993 in Vocal, Veena and Sitar respectively. Sheela with her melodious voice render-

ed the compositions competently. She has potential and could acquire proficiency with consistent practice. S. Suresh who accompanied on the Violin had his training under the veteran T. S. Krishnaswamy and acquitted himself creditably. And C. P. Surendran and Sheran Appukuttan (Shri T. S. Nandakumar's students) accompanied on Mridangam and Ghatam respectively.

Janaki's play had a touch of softness with gentle gamakas which went a long way to make the music delicate and deflective. And that is the way the instrument has to be handled. Crisp alapana and clean rendition marked her Lathangi and Hindolam while Kharaharapriya had the added lilt of Tanam. The only sector that she could be cautious is the Tala after the Eduppu in Kalpanaswaras. She has a tendency to slacken.

Gopalan Kutty, a student of Shri T. S. Nandakumar accompanied her on Mridangam.

Within a short time, Anupa seemed to have picked up the nuances of Sitar and played with confidence. And the Tabla-Mridangam-Ghatam accompaniment by Shri Milind Joshi, K. Kumar and Pramod Nair was meant to give Jugalbandi facade to the play.

The year end had Rupa Ramakrishnan, a senior student of Smt. Meera Nathan in a Vocal recital and N. Lakshmi-priya (of T. S. Krishnaswami and Visalam tutelage) in a Violin solo, with a Mini Tala Vadya Cutcheri by 'Buds' of the Mridangam class of Shri Nandakumar — Dilip. N (Mridangam), Prasad Rao (Thavil), Vidya B. (Kanjira), Sheran Appukuttan (Ghatam) and Pramod Nair (Morsing). All the three concerts registered good standard and one was sure that they would bloom in course of time into performing artistes.

A SPIRITUAL CRUSADER

A barely 6-year old Tirugnanasambandar astonished the world by composing his first hymn *Todudaya Seviyan* in the 6th century, becoming the youngest composer of the world. And a 9-year old Tirumuruga Kripananda Variar (who died in November, 1993 at the age of 87) took to musical discourse as a profession and mission to propagate the virtues of god and bhakti amidst a society riddled with chaos and corruption. If Gnanasambandar tried to uplift Hinduism against the then rising popularity of Buddhism and Jainism, Variar stood his stead battling Atheism that was gaining parallel power on religious and political fronts since early twenties. Both were child prodigies and could easily have gone into Guinness Book. But their sole aim was to get into the soul of the ultimate through music, and not seek any worldly recognition. While Gnanasambandar was the youngest composer of the world, Variar could claim to be the youngest propagator using musical discourse as his medium.

Born in 1906 at Kangayanallur near Vellore to Mallaya Das Bhagavathar, and Kanakavalli Ammal, Variar underwent rigorous training in Tamil, music and hymns. At the age of twelve, we learn, that he could command "ten thousand hymns and songs," and being the son of a musical discourses it was not surprising that he took the profession as a fish to the water. What however was surprising was, to quote a connoisseur, that "his knowledge of the scriptures and Tamil literature was so enormous without his having seen the inside of a school." So much for the disciplined upbringing he had at home which was, incidentally, his Gurukula too. He was trained in Veena and had learnt Tirupugazh from Madurai Sami Iyer and got *Diksha* as was the practice in Veena Saiva families.

A Muruga Bhakta, Variar revered Saints Arunagirinathar and Ramalinga Swamikal. A traditionalist in music and blessed with a baritone voice he commanded and conquered his audience with his musical discourses. Laced with wit and humour he easily reached the common man with his lofty ideals. There was no day when he remained free without a Pravachana Schedule. And this for nearly 70 years! His pravacharas took him all over the world and he easily reformed the men he addressed to.

Though a rich preacher, he led a simple life. Like Mahatma Gandhi he never wore a shirt. His Rudraksha Mala, his imposing figure, his baritone voice, his ever fresh memory and above all his eloquent expression of song and speech, all added a divine aura to his pravachana. Needless to say that wherever he went, he spoke and sang and he conquered.

He had not seen the inside of a school, but he dedicated his art and mission at the service of the Lord and learning. Many a temple he renovated and many a student he educated. Issueless though, the number of 'children' he brought up and 'reared' into doctors and engineers are legion. They would ever remember this great father but for whose magnificence they would have wilted into wastes.

Never known to have fallen ill, the great master-discourser fell a victim to the killer cardiac arrest while air borne enroute to Madras from London.

"Men must be taught, as if you taught them not; And things unknown proposed as things forgot."—

So said Alexander pope. And perhaps these golden words were uttered for Krupananda Variar, a rare spiritual crusader of his genre.

Sulochana Rajendran

Sri Shanmukhananda Fine Arts & Sangeetha Sabha (Regd.)

292, Jayshankar Yagnik Marg, Bombay-400 022.

SAINT THYAGARAJA'S 147TH AARADHANA CELEBRATIONS WITH NATYANJALI AND GANANJALI

Sunday — 30th January 1994

6.00 — 6.45 P.M. NATYANJALI by Kum. Anupama Sury

(A senior disciple of Guru Smt. Rajee Narayan of Nritya Geethanjali Dance Academy, Bombay, She is the great great grand daughter of Shri Umayalpuram Krishna Bhagavathar, a direct disciple of Saint Tyagaraja).

GANANJALI

7.00 — 7.30 P.M. Kum. Priyadarshini Narasimhan — Vocal
Kum. C. V. Radha — Violin
Shri L. Shankar — Mridangam
Shri Pramod N. — Ghatam

7.30 — 8.00 P.M. Shri R. Srinivasan — Vocal
Shri R. Madhavan — Violin
Master Vijay B. — Mridangam
Master Pramod — Kanjira

8.00 — 8.30 P.M. Smt. Susheela Ramamurthy — Vocal
Shri R. Madhavan — Violin
Shri Satish Raman — Mridangam
Shri Satish K. — Ghatam

8.30 — 9.00 P.M. Smt. Ganga Iyer — Vocal
Kum. C. V. Radha — Violin
Shri Kumar K. — Mridangam

Monday — 31st January 1994

8.15 A.M. THYAGARAJA AARADHANA — GROUP
RENDITION OF PANCHARATNAS

EVENING FETE

7.00 — 7.30 P.M.	Kum. Preetha Seshadri Shri C. V. Venkatesh Shri Pramod V. Shri Ravi Iyer	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam
7.30 — 8.00 P.M.	Kum. Maitreyi Sriranganathan Shri C. V. Venkatesh Shri P. V. Narayanaswamy Shri Dilip Nair	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam
8.00 — 8.30 P.M.	Kum. Shoba & Kum. Preethi Shri Nagaraj	— Veena Duet — Mridangam
8.30 — 9.30 P.M.	Utsava Sampradaya Keertanas & Anjaneya Utsavam by Students of Sangeetha Vidyalaya (Advanced & Diploma Classes)	— Vocal Group Singing
	Smt. Prema Sundaresan Shri Kumar K.	— Violin — Mridangam

MANGALAM

**SAINT PURANDARADASA DAY CELEBRATIONS WITH
DASAR NAMAS**

Saturday — 5th February 1994

6.00 — 6.30 P.M.	Kum. Radhika Natarajan Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian Shri S. Anand	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
6.30 — 7.00 P.M.	Kum. Asha Krishnaswamy Kum. Meera Mahadevan Shri S. Anand	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
7.00 — 7.30 P.M.	Kum. Ranjani Kalyanaraman Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian Shri Satish Raman Shri S. Venkataraman	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam
7.30 — 8.00 P.M.	Smt. Meenakshi Ananthakrishnan Kum. Meera Mahadevan Shri Vivek Shivram Shri Satish K.	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam
8.00 — 8.30 P.M.	Kum. K. Kalpana Kum. Meera Mahadevan Shri Narayanaswamy	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
8.30 — 9.00 P.M.	Smt. Padmini Vijayaraghavan Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian Shri Pramod N.	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam

SRI SYAMA SASTRI DAY CELEBRATIONS WITH GANANJALI

Sunday — 6th February 1994

6.00 — 6.30 P.M.	Smt. Tara Vijayaraghavan Shri R. Madhavan Shri N. Chidambaram Shri Kumar K.	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Ghatam
6.30 — 7.00 P.M.	Kum. Archana Subramanian Shri R. Madhavan Shri L. Shankar	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
7.00 — 7.30 P.M.	Smt. Visalakshi Hariharan Shri B. Anandanarayanan Master Vivek Rajagopal	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
7.30 — 8.00 P.M.	Master A. Madan Mohan Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian Master Vijay B.	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
8.00 — 8.30 P.M.	Shri Narayan Parasuram Shri R. Madhavan Master Vijay B. Shri Satish Raman	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam — Kanjira
8.30 — 9.00 P.M.	Smt. Sugandha Atreya Kum. Lakshmi Subramanian Master Vivek Rajagopal	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam

SHANMUKHANANDA SANGEETHA VIDYALAYA

Talent Exposure Concerts By Students of the Vidyalaya

27.2.1994 Sunday 6.00 — 7.00 P.M.	Kum. Asha Krishnaswamy (Senior Student of Diploma Class) Smt. Prema Sundaresan (Past student of Advanced Class) Shri K. Kumar (Student of Shri T. S. Nandakumar)	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam
7.05 — 8.05 P.M.	Kum. Archana Subramanian (Senior student of Diploma Class) Smt. Prema Sundaresan Shri K. Kumar	— Vocal — Violin — Mridangam

THE CELEBRATIONS & CONCERTS AT 1ST FLOOR FOYER

S. SESHADRI
V. RANGARAJ
Hon. Secretaries

என்னை குருவின் மகிமை

குரு, ஆசாரியன், உபாத்யாயா குருவின் ஸ்தானம் தான் எத்தனை உத்தமமானது! “மாத்ருதேவோ பவ, பித்ருதேவோ பவ, ஆசார்ய தேவோபவ..... “எழுத்தறிவித்தவன் இறைவன் ஆகும்.” ஸத்குரு, ஆசாரியனின் உதவி, அனுக்ரஹம், ஆசிர்வாதம், இன்றி எவருக்கும் குணவானாகவோ, வித்வானாகவோ, கீர்த்திமானாகவோ ஆவது சாத்தியமல்ல என்றும் ஸத்குருவே தனக்கு மிகவும் நெருங்கிய ஆப்தன் என்றும் ஸ்ரீ தியாகராஜ ஸ்வாமிகள் “குருலேக எடு வண்டி” (கௌரி மனோஹரி) கிருதியில் அழகுபட எடுத்துரைக்கிறார்.

குருபக்தி, குருநாதரிடம் மரியாதை, இவைகளைப் பற்றி எண்ணுங்கால் எனக்கு என் தந்தையின், நெடுந்தெரு ஆர். சடகோபாசாரியார், (எனது குருவின்) நினைவுக் குறிப்புகள் என்னுள் பலவித உணர்ச்சிகளைக்கிளருகிறது. எனது தந்தையின் குருநாதரான கும்பகோணம் ஸ்ரீராஜமாணிக்கம் பிள்ளையின் ஸ்வபாவம், அன்பு அபிமானம் இவைகளைப்பற்றி எனது தகப்பனார் கூறிய விஷயங்கள் இன்றும் என் மனதில் பசுமையாக உள்ளது. என்னை குரு-சிஷ்ய உறவு!

குருவின் மகத்துவம்

ஸங்கீதத்திலும், இங்கிதத்திலும் ஒருங்கிணைந்து, ஏழ்மையிலும் தன்னம்பிக்கைத்தளராது விடாமுயற்சியினாலும் அயராத சாதகத்தினாலும் நெடிதுயர்ந்து ஆலவிருட்சமாகப் பரிணமித்த வித்வான்களில் கும்பகோணம் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை பிரக்யாதி பெற்றவர் என்றால் மிகையாகாது.

ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்கள் தனக்கென ஒரு பாணியை அமைத்துக் கொண்டு ஸங்கீத உலகில் கொடி நாட்டியவர். ஸ்ருதி சுத்தம், லயசுத்தம்-ஸர்வலகுசுத்தம். எல்லாஸ்தாயிகளிலும் பிசிறில்லாமல் நல்ல நாதத்துடன் ஸுஸ்வரமாக வாசிப்பவர். நிபுணர். பக்கவாத்ய அனுசரணை - பாடுபவர்களுடனும், இதர வித்வான்களுடனும் ஒத்துழைப்பு இவ்வாறு கூறிக்கொண்டே செல்லலாம். ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களைப்பற்றி கூறுவதில் முடிவென்பது சாத்தியமில்லை.

இது இவ்வாறெனில் அவருடைய வாய்ப்பாட்டைப் பற்றி எழுத எனக்குத்தகுதியும் உண்டோ? அவர் இசைக்க ஆரம்பித்தால் இன்று முழுதும் கேட்டுக்கொண்டிருக்கலாம். மிகவும் இனிமையான, கம்பீரமான, தேன்மாதிரி சாரீரம். கீர்த்தனைகளின் அர்த்தத்தைப்பூரிந்து கொண்டு பாடுபவர். இன்றும் ஸ்ரீ பிள்ளை அவர்கள் எங்களது கிரஹத்தில் வந்து பாடிய “ராம பக்தி ஸாம்ராஜ்ய” (சுத்த பங்காளா) என் காதில் ரீங்கரித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறது. வயலினில் எப்படி மேற்கால ஸங்கதிகளை பிசிறில்லாமல் சுத்தமாக வாசிப்பாரோ அதே மாதிரியாக சாரீரத்திலும் ஒலிக்கும்.

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முதன் முதலில் எனது தகப்பனாருக்கு சங்கராபரண ஆதிதாள வர்ணம் கற்றுக் கொடுக்கும் போது எனது தந்தைக்கு சரணத்தின் முதல்ஸ்வரம் சரியாக மனதில் புரியவில்லை. (பா, மா, பா, கா, மா, கா..... என்ற ஸ்வரம்) இதில் பா, மா, பா, ஒவ்வொன்றும் 3 அக்ஷரக்கார்வை என்பது அவர் மனதில் பதியவில்லை. நான்கு அக்ஷரமாகத்தான் வந்து கொண்டிருந்ததாம். அது சமயம் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்கள் எனது தந்தையின் தாளம் போடும் தொடையில் ஓங்கி ஒரு அடி அடித்து “என்ன ஐயங்காரே! புளியோதரைசாப்பிட வருகிறது. இந்த ஸ்வரம் பாடவரவில்லையோ” எனக் கோபித்துக் கொண்டுவிட்டார். ரோஷம் வந்து விட்டது இளைஞனான எனது தந்தைக்கு. தொடைக்கன்றி சிவந்து விட்டது. ஆஜானுபாகுவான சரீரம் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களுக்கு. நல்லவாட்டசாட்ட மான கை: அடியும் பலமான அடி. எனது தந்தைக்கும் இளரத்தம். அருகிலிருந்த இதர சிஷ்யர்களான மாயூரம் ஸ்ரீகோவிந்தராஜபிள்ளை, ஸ்ரீசம்பந்தம்பிள்ளை இவர்களிடம் எனது தந்தை கூறினாராம். “இந்த ஸ்வரம் சரியாக வந்தால் நாளைக்குப் பாடத்திற்கு வருவேன். இல்லாவிடில் ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு ஒரு முழுக்குப் போட்டு விடுவேன் காவேரியில்.”

எனது தந்தை அவ்விதம் செய்திருந்தால் எனக்கு இன்று இந்த உயர்ந்தஸங்கீதம் கிடைத்திருக்குமா? எல்லாம் ஸ்ரீபகவானின் சித்தம்; குருவின் அனுக்ரஹம். நிகழ்ந்ததே வேறு.

எனது தந்தையும் கடுமையான ஸாதகம் செய்பவர். விடாமுயற்சி தன்னம்பிக்கை மிக உண்டு. முரட்டு ஸாதகம். ஒன்று வரவில்லை என்றால் அது வரும் வரை விடவும் மாட்டார். ஆகாரம். தூக்கம் இவை பிறகுதான். அன்று இரவு முழுவதும் தூங்காமல் கடுமையான உண்மையான ஸாதகம். அண்டை வீட்டுக்காரர்களின் பரிகாசமான “என்னடா? மாமா பா பா என்று ஓயாமல் கூவுகிறாய்” என்ற வார்த்தைகளையும் பொருட்படுத்தாமல் ஸாதகம். பலன்? இரவு 2 மணிக்கு கிடைத்துவிட்டது. அந்த 3 அக்ஷரக்கார்வை வந்ததை ஸ்திரப்படுத்த வேண்டுமே. திரும்பவும் 5 மணி வரை ஸாதகம். மிகவும் ஸந்தோஷத்துடன் நெடுந்தெருவிலிருந்து கும்பகோணம் செல்ல காலைக்கடன்களை முடித்துக் கொண்டு கிளம்புகிறார்.

இது இப்படி இருக்க, கும்பகோணத்தில் சிஷ்யர்கள் ஐயங்கார் இவ்வாறு கூறிச்சென்று விட்டார் என்று ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களிடம் தெரிவித்து விட்டனர். அதைக்கேட்டு ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்கள் மறுநாள் காலை தனது காரை எடுத்துக் கொண்டு நெடுந்தெருவிற்கே வந்து விட்டார்.

எனது தந்தை பாடத்திற்கு செல்லக்கிளம்பி வாசலுக்கு வருவதற்கும் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களின் கார் வந்து நிற்பதற்கும் சரியாக இருந்தது. எனது தந்தை ஆச்சர்யத்துடன், யார் இது! இவ்வளவு அதிகாலையில் காரில் வந்து இறங்குகிறார்கள், என்று பார்த்தாராம். தனது குருவான அந்த தெய்வத்தைக் கண்டதும் மிகவும் வியப்பு, பிரமிப்பு, ஒன்றும் சொல்லமுடியாத நிலை. ஆனால் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களோ மிகவும் வாத்தஸ்யத்துடன், “என்ன ஐயங்காரே! நேற்று சம்பந்தத்திடம் என்னவோ ஸங்கீதத்திற்கு காவேரியில் முழுக்குப் போட்டுவிடுவேன் என்று சொன்னாயாமே. உன்னை அழைத்துக் கொண்டு போகத்தான் வந்திருக்கிறேன்” என்று கூற எனது தந்தையும்

மிகவும் வினயத்துடன், “நேற்று இருந்த மனநிலையில் என்னவோ அவ்வாறு சொல்லிவிட்டேன். ஆனால் இரவு முழுதும் செய்த முயற்சியில் எனக்கு அந்த ஸ்வரம் வந்து விட்டது” என்று கூறினாராம். அது கேட்டு மிக ஸந்தோஷத்துடன் ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களும் “எங்கே பாடிக்காட்டு” என்று கூறி வாசல் திண்ணையிலேயே உட்கார், எனது தந்தையும் பாடி காட்ட, தந்தையை தனது காரிலேயே அழைத்துக் கொண்டு சென்றாராம் கும்பகோணத்திற்கு. என்னே ஒரு வாத்ஸல்யம்!

இன்னுமொரு நிகழ்ச்சி. ஒரு நாள் எனது தந்தை பிலஹரி ராகத்தை மிகவும் விஸ்தாரமாகப்பாடி “ஸ்ரீபாலஸுப்ரமண்ய” கிருதியை மிகவும் அழகாகப்பாடி, கல்பனா ஸ்வரமும் வெகுவிமரிசையாகப் பாடினாராம். அது சமயம் ஸ்ரீசம்பந்தம் பிள்ளை அவர்கள் வயலின்வாசித்தாரம். எப்பொழுதும் எனது தந்தை, ஸ்ரீசம்பந்தம்பிள்ளை, ஸ்ரீகோவிந்தராஜு பிள்ளை சேர்ந்தே இருந்து கொண்டு ஸாதகம் செய்வார்களாம். எனது தந்தை பிலஹரிராகம் பாடியதை ஸ்ரீசம்பந்தம்பிள்ளை அவர்கள் குருவான ஸ்ரீராஜமாணிக்கம் பிள்ளை அவர்களிடம் சென்று “ஐயங்கார் மிகவும் நன்றாக, இண்டு இடுக்கு விடாமல் பிலஹரி ராகத்தை ரொம்பவும் அழகாகப்பாடினார்” என்று சொல்ல, அதைக்கேட்ட ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்கள் எனது தந்தை இருக்குமிடம் வந்து “ஐயங்காரே! ரொம்பவும் நன்றாக பிலஹரிராகம் பாடுகிறாயாமே! எங்கே பாடு. நான் உனக்கு வயலின் வாசிக்கிறேன்” என்று சொல்ல, அதைக்கேட்ட ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்கள் வாசித்தாரம். என்னே குரு - சிஷ்ய உறவு!

இவ்வாறு எழுத்திலடங்கா நினைவுக்குறிப்புகள் எத்தனையோ, ஸ்ரீபிள்ளை அவர்களைப் பற்றி. ஆக குருவின் ஸ்தானம், குருவின் மதிப்பு எவ்வளவு என்பதை எழுதவும் இயலுமோ?

இதனால் தானோ என்னவோ ஸ்ரீபகவானுக்கே அந்த ஆசை வந்து, ஸர்வலோகமும் புகழும், வணங்கும், ஸ்ரீகிருஷ்ண பரமாத்மா கீதாசார்யன், தானே சிஷ்யனாக சாந்தீபனி முனிவரிடத்தில் இருந்து, குருகுலவாசம் செய்து, வெய்யில் மழை, காடு மலைபாராமல் விறகு, சுள்ளி பொறுக்கிக் கொடுத்து, குருவின் ஸ்தானம் என்ன என்பதை நிரூபித்தாரோ!

!!! ஸ்ரீகுருநாதர்துணை!!!

ரமா கிருஷ்ண ஸ்வாமி